

DISCOURSES
ON
SEVERAL SUBJECTS
AND
OCCASIONS.

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DISCOVERIES
ON
SEVERAL SUBJECTS
AND
OCCASIONS.

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GEORGE HORNE, D.D.

Late Lord Bishop of Norwich.

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BY GEORGE HORNE, D. D.

LATE BISHOP OF NORWICH,

AND

PRESIDENT OF MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

OXFORD:

PRINTED FOR J. COOKE;
AND G. G. AND J. ROBINSON, T. CADELL, AND
F. AND C. RIVINGTON, LONDON.
M.DCC.XCIV.

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DISCOURSE I.

THE NECESSITY OF BELIEVING.

MARK XVI. 15, 16.

*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world,
and preach the Gospel to every creature. He
that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved;
but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

IT has been matter of wonder and offence DISC.
to many, that in the great concern of 1.
man's salvation, so much stress should be
laid upon *faith*. "He that believeth shall
"be saved; but he that believeth not shall
"be condemned." Innumerable are the
passages in different parts of the Scriptures,
which evidently speak the same thing.
They are well known, and need not be

DISC. now cited. The point is one of great
I. importance, and I shall endeavour to clear
 it to your apprehensions by

I. Removing out of the way those objections which have been made, and perhaps have already arisen in your own minds; and then

II. Stating the grounds and reasons on which this divine determination is founded.

I. Of the objections some respect the persons who are to believe, and others the doctrines to be believed.

Thousands and ten thousands, it may be said, never heard of Christ, or his Gospel. It is true; and to them most certainly the determination does not extend. It can extend to such alone as have the Gospel preached to them. "Go ye, and preach the Gospel; he that believeth"—that is, believeth the Gospel so preached to him—"shall be saved," &c.

But

But what, then, shall be the lot of all those, who lived and died strangers to Christianity? They are in the hands of a gracious God, who may bestow on them the mercies of a redemption, of which they never heard. Without the death of Christ no flesh could have been saved. But who can say, to how many, and in what different ways, the merits of that death may be applied? For his sake, the sins may be pardoned of all those, who in honesty and uprightness did their best, according to the knowledge vouchsafed them, during the dispensation under which they lived. He who holds up his hand at the bar of eternal judgment, will not be there tried by a law which he never knew. The apostle to the Romans is express, that the Jews, who have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law; and the Gentiles, who were without *that* law, shall be judged by the rule they had derived in part by tradition from their ancestors, and improved and enlarged by their own reasonings and disquisitions. But then, as the same apostle

DISC.
1.

B 2

argues

disc. argues at large, every man, whether Jew
I. or Gentile, who is tried by a law of *works*,
 will, in strictness of speaking, be cast; be-
 cause it will be proved upon him, that he
 has broken it. All the world are become
 guilty before God, and must place their
 hope in the mercies of that redemption,
 which is by Christ Jesus.

The same limitation must of course take
 place in the case of infants, idiots, persons
 insane, and any way so defective in under-
 standing, as to be incapable of learning and
 believing aright. He who made us, know-
 eth whereof we are made; he knoweth
 what is in man—in every man; and will
 not exact the tale of bricks, where he hath
 not thought proper to furnish straw.

We may conclude in like manner con-
 cerning what is called *invincible ignorance*,
 or ignorance so circumstanced as to admit
 of no remedy. “How can they hear with-
 out a preacher?” Where nothing is
 taught, nothing can be learned.

But

But let a man be very cautious how he attempts to shelter himself under this plea. DISC. I.

At the great day, it will be enquired very minutely, not only what we *did* know, but also what we *might* have known, had we so pleased; had we been in earnest, and taken due pains. In the whole compass of speculation, there is not a more awful and alarming thought than this. The sinner may say, I did not know; but it will be returned—Why did you not? Had you no opportunities, which you neglected; no books, no persons, to whom you might apply? Did you ask, did you search, as you would have done, if likely to lose your health, or your estate? Or did you account it a matter not worthy your enquiry; and so, in a careless manner, dismiss it to take its chance? How have you been employed? How have you passed your time? A very small proportion of the hours spent in one single amusement would have brought you acquainted with all that it behoved you to know and believe, for your soul's health. I mention this, to shew, that however it

Disce. may fare with heathens, and others in a
1. state really destitute of information, and
 where it was impossible to be obtained, we
 shall in vain attempt to excuse our unbelief,
 or ill practices, by our ignorance. Nothing,
 at the day of trial, will more shock and
 confound us, than when the times and the
 places shall be pointed out, in which we
 were called to know and to do better, but
 refused to obey the call. Let none, there-
 fore, deceive themselves in this very weighty
 particular.

Respecting the doctrines to be believed,
 it is objected, that they are *mysterious*;
 they relate to persons and things in another
 world, which are therefore *bidden* from us;
 we can neither see them, nor hear them:
 none of the senses, with which we are at
 present endowed, can reach or perceive
 them. What then is to be done? Why,
 certainly, we must believe the account
 which God, by his prophets and apostles,
 has been pleased to give us, and we must
 form our notions of them, as well as we
 can,

can, by comparison with those things which ^{DISC.} are the objects of our senses. Our state, I. with regard to God and the glories of his heavenly kingdom, is exactly like the state of a blind man, with regard to the sun, and the light thereof. He cannot see the sun, or the light that issues from it; yet, he would be unreasonable, should he refuse to believe what his friends, who do see it, tell him concerning it; though, after all, they can give him but a very poor, imperfect idea of it. If it pleased God to open his eyes, and bestow on him the blessing of sight, he would know more of the matter in one single moment, than description, study, and meditation, could have taught him in a hundred years, or a thousand years, or ten thousand years. Such is our case. We cannot see God; we cannot see the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; we cannot see how they are three, and how they are one. But shall we therefore, in opposition to the authority and word of God himself, deny that they are so? We may reason and dispute upon the subject for ages; but in that instant, when

DISC. we are admitted to his presence, and “see
 I. — “him as he is,” every doubt and difficulty
 will vanish at once; and we shall know—
 how little we *did* know, or possibly *could*
 know, before. Tell a blind man, your
 sight can travel over the space of one
 hundred millions of miles, as soon as it
 can move the distance of ten yards—How
 full of absurdity, contradiction, and im-
 possibility, must this assertion appear to
 him, who can conceive of motion only in
 slow succession! Yet it is a certain truth:
 for let a person be led forth, in a clear night,
 with his eyes closed; on opening them, he
 will see the remotest star in the firmament,
 that can be seen at all, as soon as he will
 see a candle, at the distance only of a few
 yards from him.

This instance may serve to shew, how
 very ill qualified we are to dispute with our
 Maker concerning his own nature and ex-
 istence, and the things of another and invi-
 sible world. Of the truth of Revelation
 we have the most decisive evidence, that of
 the

the senses, in the miracles wrought by Christ and his Apostles, of which the eyes and ears of men were sufficient judges. Knowing therefore assuredly that God hath spoken, and giving diligent attention to that which he hath spoken, it is our part at present to believe what we shall one day be permitted to see.

DISC.

I.

Another objection to the doctrines of which we are treating is, that learned men have been engaged in controversies about them for many hundred years, and are not yet agreed: what therefore must the unlearned do?

To this it may be answered, in the first place, that learned men have carried on controversies about every thing. Some have thought there is no Revelation at all; some that there is no Providence, some that there is no God; and while some have denied that there is any world but this, in which we live, others have maintained, that this world itself is a dream and a fancy, existing only

DISC. only in our own minds, and that in reality
1. there is no such thing. So that if we wait
 till all learned men shall agree, we shall
 believe nothing, know nothing, and do
 nothing.

2. All the disputes concerning the Tri-
 nity have been owing to one single circum-
 stance, namely, the vain, idle, and presump-
 tuous curiosity of man, who, instead of be-
 lieving that which God hath revealed, will
 ever be prying into that which God hath
 not revealed. That there is in the Deity a
 distinction, and an union; that God is three,
 in some respect, and one, in some other
 respect; this is what we are required to
 believe: and who can prove that it is not
 so? Or why should any man dispute it?
 But we are not content, unless we know
 precisely the manner *how* the three persons
 are one God; how the Son is generated,
 and the Holy Ghost proceeds. Hence all
 our misfortunes: hence the subject has been
 overwhelmed and confounded by an inun-
 dation of scholastic and metaphysical con-
 troversy,

troverſy, which it requires no ſmall degree DISC.
of penetration and ſagacity, as well as of I.
learning, to underſtand; if indeed ſome of
it can be underſtood at all. If you aſk,
what the unlearned are to do, with regard
to this diſpute?—I anſwer, they are happy
in their ignorance, in which I would wiſh
them ever to continue. Two learned phy-
ſicians may differ in opinion, as to the
manner in which the human body is nou-
riſhed by it's food; they may perplex each
other with hard words; they may argue
themſelves out of temper, and loſe their
appetite; while an unlearned, plain, honeſt
countryman eats his meal in quietneſs,
gives God thanks for it, goes forth in the
ſtrength of it to his labour, and in the
evening receives his reward.

In the concerns of this world, as well as
of another, the moſt intereſting truths are
always the plaineſt; they are matters of
fact, on which we may depend, without
being ſolicitous to know exactly how they
are brought about. Who can tell by what
means

DISC. means a small seed, buried in the earth,
I. and there becoming, to all appearance, dead
 and putrid, shoots forth into a blade, and
 an ear, producing thirty, forty, or sixty
 seeds, of it's own kind? A man, calling
 himself a philosopher, might defy the hus-
 bandman to shew, how this could possi-
 bly be. The husbandman's common sense
 would direct him to answer, that it was
 not his concern to shew *how* it could be;
 that he knew it certainly would be, and
 therefore should continue to sow; which
 should he, upon the strength of the phi-
 losopher's arguments, neglect to do, the
 world must be starved.

Objections thus removed, let us now

II. Consider the grounds and reasons on
 which is founded the divine determination
 in the text, namely, that when the Gospel
 is preached, it is necessary, in order to a
 man's salvation, that he should believe it.

And this point will require but little to
 be said upon it. For to what purpose is
 the

the Gospel preached, unless that it should disc.
be believed? When God, with so stupen- 1.
dous a preparation of prophecies and mira-
cles, has published his word, can it be a
matter of indifference whether we believe
it or not? Can any man in his senses pos-
sibly think it such? Surely not: the Lord
of heaven and earth is not with impunity
to be insulted and trifled with, in this
manner. "He that believeth not the re-
"cord which God hath given of his Son,"
as the beloved disciple has justly observed,
"makes God a liar." If man give the lie
to man, it is judged an offence to be ex-
piated only by the blood of the offender.
Can man, then, give the lie to his Maker,
and be blameless?

The divine word is not an insignificant
word; it is set, like it's author, for the
falling or rising of many. It is not without
it's effect in every one to whom it is
preached. If we will not suffer it to avail
to our salvation, it will avail to our con-
demnation. "The word that I speak," says
our

DISC. our Lord, "that shall judge him, at the

1. "last day."

What is it that distinguishes a Christian from a Jew, a Turk, or a heathen? It is his faith, his knowledge of Christ and the Gospel, his belief in all that has been revealed. When he no longer retains that belief, he ceases to be a Christian; he ceases to have any share or interest in Christ; he becomes an apostate from his religion.

A strange doctrine has of late years been diffused among us, that *sincerity* is every thing; that if a man be but *sincere*, it matters not what he believes, or what he does. If this principle be carried to its full extent, it must take away all distinction between truth and falsehood, right and wrong; it sets upon a level those who crucified Christ, and those who accepted him as their lord and master; those who persecuted the Christians, and the Christians who were persecuted. Many who assisted

at

at the crucifixion of Christ, might really DISC.
imagine that he was a deceiver, and that I.
they did right in so punishing him. But
was he therefore a deceiver, or *did* they do
right? St. Paul tell us, that, in his un-
converted state, he “*verily thought* he
“ought to do many things contrary to the
“name of Jesus of Nazareth;” and, ac-
cordingly, he “was exceedingly mad against
“the disciples,” and would have extirpated
that name from the earth, had it been in
his power. But was he justified in endea-
vouring to do this, because he had taken
up a false persuasion? Undoubtedly not.
He confesses himself to have been, on this
account, the greatest of sinners, and that
he obtained mercy only through the unde-
served grace and goodness of God. The case
is this—Before a man can lay any claim to
sincerity, in the full and proper sense of the
word, he must be able to shew, when
God, to whom all things are known, and
all hearts are open, shall call upon him,
that he has not, through indolence, neg-
lected to search after the truth, nor through
passion,

DISC. passion, prejudice, or interest, refused to
1. receive it. This will go to the bottom of the dispute, and lay open the deception.

It will enable us likewise to answer another plea sometimes urged in favour of infidelity, namely, that there can be no merit, or demerit, in believing, or disbelieving; that a man cannot believe as he pleases, but only as the evidence appears to him.

How argues the Apostle upon this topic?—"What if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the word of God of none effect? God forbid! Let God be true"—God will be true—"though every man be a liar." If God have given, as he certainly has given, good and sufficient evidence, it is at any man's peril that he rejects it; and he rejects it, not for insufficiency in the evidence, but from some hidden corruption in his heart, which ought to have been first cast out, before he sat down to judge.

In

In the presence of a multitude of spec- DISC.
tators, Christ raised Lazarus from the dead. 1.
On seeing the miracle, many believed on
him, and became his disciples. Why did
not all do so, for all saw the miracle?
There could be no deception: none was
thought of, or suspected: all allowed that
a person dead was, by a word spoken, re-
called to life. Yet there were those, who,
instead of joining themselves to Christ, and
acknowledging their Messiah, consulted that
they might put Lazarus to death. It does
not always happen, that we can know
what passes in the minds of men, on such
occasions. But, in the present instance, we
are admitted behind the scenes, and full in-
formation is communicated. "Then ga-
"thered the chief priests and pharisees a
"council, and said, What do we? for this
"man doth many miracles. If we let him
"thus alone, all men will believe on him;
"and the Romans shall come and take
"away both our place and nation." Want
of evidence is not the complaint. "This
"man doth many miracles;" the point is
VOL. IV. C conceded;

DISC. conceded; but politics interfered; they ap-
I. prehended they should suffer, if they con-
 fessed Christ, from the Roman government,
 to which they were then subject. They
 therefore stifled their convictions, forced
 their consciences, and from that day forth,
 to make all sure, took "counsel to put
 "Jesus to death." They carried their coun-
 sel into execution; and the consequence
 was, that what before they vainly feared,
 now actually happened — "the Romans
 "did come, and did take away both their
 "place and nation." This may serve to
 convince you, how large a share the *will*
 has in the production of faith; and that
 no evidence in the world will cause a man
 to believe that, which, for private reasons,
 he does not *choose* to believe.

I shall conclude with mentioning the
 chief ground on which the necessity of
 faith is so much pressed in Scripture,
 namely, because it comprehends in it the
 great motives of action; it is the prin-
 ciple of life. "The just shall live by
 "faith,"

“faith,” says the apostle, at the conclusion DISC.
of the xth chapter of the Epistle to the He- I.
brews; and if, at your leisure, you will
peruse the xith chapter, you will there find
a history of the great and wonderful works,
wrought by holy men in old time, from
Abel downwards, through the power of
this principle. In us, to whom more has
been revealed than was revealed to them,
it should not be less operative and effectual,
than it was in them. We shall constantly
perceive the vigour of our practice to be pro-
portionable to the steadfastness and liveliness
of our faith; what revives one, will always
quicken the other. From every doctrine in
the creed issues a commandment; and the
doctrine stirs us up to keep the command-
ment.

When, by reciting the creed, we declare
our belief in God, the Father, the Son,
and the Holy Ghost, with all that each
has done for us; we should love the Father,
for his tender love; adore the Almighty,
for his infinite power; and commit our

DISC. souls to him, in well-doing, as to a faithful
I. Creator.

From Jesus we should seek salvation; from Christ, the anointed, as a prophet, instruction; as a priest, atonement; as a king, protection; as the only begotten Son, the adoption of children. As our Lord, we should serve him, for his conception, in faith; for his nativity, in humility; for his sufferings, in patience; for his cross, in crucifying sin; for his death, in mortifying the flesh; for his burial, in burying the old man, with his evil desires; for his descent, in meditation on the other world; for his resurrection, in newness of life; for his ascension and inthronization, in setting our affections on things above, on the pleasures at God's right hand; for his return, in awe of his second coming; for his judgment, in judging ourselves, before we come to be judged by him.

From the Spirit we should seek the breath of saving grace; that so, in the
 church,

church, we may partake of a high and disc.
heavenly calling; in the holy church, of 1.
sanctification; in the catholic church, of
communion with our brethren, in prayers
and sacraments; and all this, to a firm per-
suasion of the remission of our sins, as well
as a confident hope of resurrection and
translation to life eternal. Thus is the creed
at once a profession of faith, a manual of
devotions, and a directory of practice—
“The just shall live by his faith.”

That we may evermore preserve this faith
pure and undefiled, and that “by works
“faith may be made perfect,” God of his
infinite mercy grant, through Jesus Christ.

church, we may partake of a high and precious calling; in the holy church of sanctification; in the catholic church of communion with our brethren in prayers and sacraments; and all this to a firm persuasion of the remission of our sins, as well as a confident hope of resurrection and translation to life eternal. Thus is the creed at once a profession of faith, a manual of devotions, and a directory of practice—"The just shall live by his faith."

That we may evermore perceive this faith pure and unfeigned, and that "by works," faith may be made perfect, God of his infinite mercy grant, through Jesus Christ.

DISCOURSE II.

JOSHUA'S CHOICE.

JOSHUA XXIV. 15.

*Choose ye this day whom ye will serve—but as for
me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*

A NOBLE resolution! formed by a DISC.
very eminent person, on a very so- II.
lemn occasion. That person was Joshua,
the leader of the hosts of Israel, by whose
arm it pleased God to execute upon sinful
nations the punishments due to their crimes,
and to place his chosen people in the land
promised to their fathers. The General
was now “old and stricken in age,” and
the hour of death drew near. Before it
came, he wished to deliver his final senti-

disc. ments to the people under his command.

II.

They were assembled for that purpose; "he called for all Israel, for their elders, "and for their heads, and for their judges, "and for their officers; and they presented "themselves before God," as you do this day. They were not backward, we may be sure, in coming. Last words are always listened to with attention, as likely to be words of truth, and words of importance. Dying men do not usually utter falsehoods, or speak of trifles. But the last words of a veteran officer, under whom they had fought and conquered, of a wise and heaven-directed ruler, by whom they had been settled, according to their tribes, in pleasant and peaceable habitations, must above all others deserve to be heard, and remembered for ever. He reminded them of all the mercies which God from time to time had shewn to the nation, of the wonders that had been wrought, and the very minute and punctual manner in which the divine promises had been fulfilled. He urged from hence the return which they ought to make,

make, and the bitter consequences which disc.
they might expect to follow their ingra- II.
titude and apostacy: since God would not
be less exact in the infliction of his threats,
than he had been in the performance of
his promises. The means by which these
likewise would be accomplished, were
pointed out. Notwithstanding their esta-
blishment in Canaan, enemies of that esta-
blishment still subsisted, and were left for
this very end, in case of their rebellion,
“to be scourges in their sides, and thorns
“in their eyes, till they perished from off
“the good land, which the Lord their
“God had given them.” He then draws
all his instructions and admonitions to a
point, and thus leaves his testimony re-
corded against them, on the behalf of him-
self and his family—“If it seem evil unto
“you to serve the Lord, choose ye this
“day whom ye will serve—but as for me
“and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

Such are the particulars of the case al-
luded to in the words of the text. The
general

DISC. general instruction they contain may be
II. drawn forth, for our own use, by considering, *why* we are to serve; *whom* we are to serve; and *how* we are to serve.

I. If we attend to the writings of some, and the manners of more, in the present age, we shall be led to think, that we are not to serve either God or man; that we have nothing to do with church or state; that the world is a forest, into which we are turned loose, like so many wild asses colts, to snuff up the wind, and run till we drop; in a word, that we are *born free and independent*. Alas, poor creatures! *Free and independent*, indeed! Why we should not live six hours to an end, after our birth, in such a state. From the first moment in which we see light, we depend, for preservation and support, on the good offices of those around us; they depend on others, and all on God. One planteth, and another watereth; but who else can give the increase? Who is it else that can direct the operations of the powers of nature, concerned

cerned in bringing food out of the earth; that can open the bottles of heaven, to pour down a kindly rain; or can stay them, when they threaten to overwhelm and destroy all the hopes of a promised harvest? Let others talk of matter and motion, of chance, or necessity; "WE praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord."

Disc.
II.

To behold the fair frame of the world, with the several parts so constructed as they are for use and beauty, and all the various movements carried on in it, and to suppose it had no Maker, must surely argue a great defect of understanding. "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God;" and he is represented as having said it only *in his heart*, not daring to utter with his mouth so preposterous a sentiment. Lives there a man, who can look at a house, or even a plow, and imagine, for a moment, that it made itself? How much less, then, the heavens and the earth, and the works that are therein? Away with the idle fancy,
the

DISC. the sick man's dream ; it would be criminal to waste any more time in the consideration of it !

But shall we then suppose, that he who created the world has withdrawn himself from the care of it ; that he regards not the creatures which he has made, nor desires to be regarded by them ? The supposition is unnatural and absurd. It was made by one sect of the heathen only, in their lowest and darkest state, and that sect long abhorred by the rest for it's folly and impiety. When riches flowed in from the *East*, and luxury had corrupted the minds, and unstrung the nerves of the old Romans, these tenets became fashionable ; a circumstance which was thought, by wise men, to prognosticate and to hasten the downfall of the empire. It is matter of melancholy reflection to observe, that the very same tenets have been of late revived and recommended in Great Britain, under the name and notion of *philosophy*, and are, if fame says true, daily gaining ground among the wealthy

wealthy and the great, from whom they DISC.
will soon descend to the middle and lower II.
ranks, till the religious principle shall perish
from among us. May Heaven avert the
omen, and save the land ! The offence of
Englishmen far exceeds that of the Ro-
mans, and is very greatly aggravated by
this consideration : they who were atheists
formerly, were atheists in opposition to a
false religion ; they who are atheists now,
are such in opposition to the true. The
Son of God is come, and has led us into all
truth. The Scriptures have dispelled (and
it ought to have been *for ever*) such gloomy
and comfortless principles. They give us
full assurance, that the providence of God
extendeth itself over all things, and all per-
sons ; that though his throne be indeed far
removed from us, though it be exalted as
the sun, yet that, like the sun, “ Jehovah
“ looketh from heaven, he beholdeth all
“ the sons of men ; from the place of his
“ habitation he looketh upon all the inha-
“ bitants of the earth ;” that he doth
what the sun cannot do—“ He fashioneth
“ their

DISC. "their hearts alike, and considereth all
II. "their works;" that "the eyes of all wait
 "on him, and he giveth them their food
 "in due season."

Man being thus dependent, it is but reasonable that he should acknowledge such dependence, and that he should *serve*. We are to enquire,

II^{dly}, *Whom* he should serve. For, as the Apostle has remarked, "there are Gods many, and Lords many," who in different ages have claimed and obtained the homage of mankind. The point in dispute between Joshua and his people was not, whether they should serve *at all*, but *whom* they should serve; whether the gods of the nations around them, or Jehovah, the God of Israel.

It may seem difficult to account for, and even to conceive, that strange propensity which appears in the early ages of the world to the worship of idols, and of which
 nothing

nothing less than a seventy years captivity in Babylon could finally cure the Israelites themselves. Before that event, notwithstanding all the miracles of power and goodness which God had wrought for them, we read continually of their forsaking *him*, and going over to the worship of *strange gods*. Who these *strange gods* were, or what charms they possessed, thus to bewitch and seduce the minds of persons better taught and instructed, deserves consideration.

DISC.
II.

Now it appears, by the testimony of all history sacred and profane, that the oldest and first idolaters worshipped the creature instead of the Creator, the powers of nature instead of the God of nature. Receiving life, health, food, and many other blessings by means of the sun, the light, and the air, they forgot God who made those elements, and “deemed *them* to be the gods that “governed the world,” supposing them to be endued with understanding and wisdom, as well as power and might.

This

DISC. This kind of idolatry perished long ago,
 II. with the nations among whom it was
 practised. But let us not imagine we our-
 selves are therefore free from the crime ;
 since every man is guilty of it, who offers
 to the *world*, or any thing *in the world*, the
 service which is due to God only.

The Scripture declares concerning co-
 vetousness, that it is *idolatry* ; and concern-
 ing unbelievers and bad men in general,
 that they serve the *God* of this world.
 He therefore who devotes his time and his
 pains, his words and his actions, his heart
 and his affections, to the pursuit of power,
 wealth, or pleasure, in effect revives the old
 idolatry, and virtually sacrifices to the Gods
 of the nations. He serves the creature,
 rather than the Creator. And of the service
 which he is often led to perform it cannot
 be said, as it is truly said of another and
 better service, that it is " perfect freedom."
 They who, in veneration of Baal, cut
 themselves with knives and lancets, or, out
 of respect to Moloch, made their children
 to

to pass through the fire, would not suffer, DISC.
perhaps, by the comparison. Health and 11.
peace, honour and conscience, present happiness and future expectancies, are costly oblations, daily and hourly offered at the shrine of these sublunary deities.

The *world*, in short, under one form or other, has ever been the idol set up against God by the adversary of mankind, like the image erected by the monarch of Babylon, in the plain of Dura, before which “the
“princes, the governors, and the captains,
“the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors,
“the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were to fall down, and worship.”

The world, with its fashions and its follies, its principles and its practices, has been proposed in form to Englishmen, as the proper object of their attention and devotion.

A late celebrated nobleman has avowed as much with respect to himself, and by his writings said in effect to it, “Save me,
“for thou art my God!” He has tendered his assistance to act as priest upon the
VOL. IV. D occasion,

DISC. occasion, and conduct the ceremonial. At
II. the close of life, however, his God, he found, was about to forsake him, and therefore was forsaken by him. — You shall hear some of his last sentiments and expressions, which have not been hitherto (so far as I know) duly noticed, and applied to their proper use, that of furnishing an antidote (and they do furnish a very powerful one) to the noxious positions contained in his volumes. They are well worthy your strictest attention. “I have run” (says this man of the world) “the silly rounds of
“ business and pleasure, and have done with
“ them all.—I have enjoyed all the pleasures
“ of the world, and consequently know their
“ futility, and do not regret their loss. I
“ appraise them at their real value, which
“ is in truth very low; whereas those that
“ have not experienced, always over-rate
“ them. They only see their gay outside,
“ and are dazzled with their glare. But I
“ have been behind the scenes. I have
“ seen all the coarse pullies, and dirty ropes,
“ which exhibit and move the gawdy ma-
“ chines;

“chines; and I have seen and smelt the DISC.
“tallow candles, which illuminate the II.
“whole decoration, to the astonishment and
“admiration of an ignorant audience.—
“When I reflect back upon what I have
“seen, what I have heard, and what I have
“done, I can hardly persuade myself that all
“that frivolous hurry and bustle and plea-
“sure of the world had any reality; but I
“look upon all that has passed as one of those
“romantic dreams which opium commonly
“occasions; and I do by no means desire to
“repeat the nauseous dose, for the sake of
“the fugitive dream. Shall I tell you that
“I bear this melancholy situation with
“that meritorious constancy and resignation
“which most people boast of? No; for I
“really cannot help it. I bear it—because
“I must bear it, whether I will or no—I
“think of nothing but killing time the best
“I can, now that he is become mine ene-
“my.—It is my resolution to sleep in the
“carriage, during the remainder of the
“journey.”

DISC.

II.

When a Christian priest speaks slightly of the world, he is supposed to do it in the way of his profession, and to decry, through envy, the pleasures he is forbidden to taste. But here, I think, you have the testimony of a witness every way competent. No man ever knew the world better, or enjoyed more of it's favours, than this nobleman. Yet you see in how poor, abject, and wretched a condition, at the time when he most wanted help and comfort, the world left him, and he left the world. The sentences above-cited from him compose, in my humble opinion, the most striking and affecting sermon upon the subject, ever yet preached to mankind. My younger friends, lay them up in your minds, and write them on the tables of your hearts; take them into life with you: they will prove an excellent preservative against temptation. When you have duly considered them, and the character of him by whom they were uttered, you shall compare them, if you please, with the words of another person, who took his
leave

leave of the world in a very different manner—“ I am now ready to be offered, and
“ the time of my departure is at hand. I
“ have fought a good fight, I have finished
“ my course, I have kept the faith; hence-
“ forth there is laid up for me a crown
“ of righteousness, which the Lord, the
“ righteous judge, will give me at that day.”
Say, shall your lot be with the Christian,
or the man of the world; with the Apostle,
or the libertine? You will not hesitate a
moment, but in reply to those who may
attempt to seduce you into the paths of
vice and error, honestly and boldly exclaim,
every one of you, with Joshua, “ Choose
“ ye this day whom ye will serve; but as
“ for me and my house, we will serve the
“ Lord.”

III. *How* we are to serve him, is the last point to be settled.

A concise way of coming at this, will be, to reflect upon the qualifications you require in a good servant, and to see that they be

DISC. found in yourselves, considered as the fer-

II.

vants of God.

These qualifications may all be reduced to two, that he be careful to know the will of his master, and diligent to do it. Both are most happily expressed and exemplified in the question asked by St. Paul, immediately upon his conversion,—“Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?”—Never was there more interesting matter contained in so few plain and simple words. They were the first effect of the divine grace inspired into his heart. All the virtues and excellencies of his after life were comprehended in the disposition implied by them, as a plant is in it's seed. They included the acorn, from whence arose that oak, which overshadowed and refreshed the world.

Upon a general view of them, they evidently intimate to us, a renunciation of all our former proceedings, during the time when we followed the motions of our own wills;

wills; a firm resolution of obeying the will of God, for the residue of our days; and a hearty desire of attaining to the knowledge of it, for that purpose, and for that purpose only.

DISC.

II.

But it is worth while to be a little more particular.

In our enquiries after the will of God, we are often apt to be partial. We enquire only after such parts of it as may happen to coincide with our circumstances, our situation, our tempers, our constitutions, our interests. There are other parts, perhaps, which might cross and thwart the turn of our minds, or our views in life; take away some of our comforts, or deprive us even of some conveniences. With these parts we care not to form any acquaintance, lest conscience should insist on our obedience, or trouble and torment us for our disobedience. There are not infrequently therefore certain points in reserve, of so tender and delicate a nature, that we suffer them not to be

disc. approached by others, nor indeed dare to
II. approach them, ourselves.—But there are
 no reserves in St. Paul's question—"Lord,
 " *what* wouldest thou have me to do?"
 Whatever it may be, whatever the difficul-
 ties, whatever the consequences—"none
 " of those things move me"—I am ready.
 " Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

It is a maxim laid down by our blessed Saviour, that "no man can serve *two* mas-
 " ters." A more indisputable maxim cannot
 be laid down; because as the wills of the
 two masters may, and probably will be
 different, or even contrary, their commands
 will be so too; and therefore cannot be
 obeyed by the same person, who must soon
 be obliged to give up one, and adhere to
 the other. Plain as this truth appears to
 be, it is late in life before we are convinced
 of it; before we cease to hope, that, by a
 little management, we can contrive to please
 God and the world. Different was the
 opinion of Joshua. He did not suppose it
 possible, at the same time, to serve *Jehovah*,
 and

and the gods of the nations. "Choose ye DISC.

"whom ye will serve—I will serve *Jehovah*." II.

Agreeably to which, St. Paul asks, "Lord,

"what wilt *thou* have me to do?" Not—

what will my own inclinations, what will

my friends, what will my kinsfolk, what

will the world—but—"what wilt *thou*—

"my Saviour, and my God—what wilt

"*thou* have me to do?"—"Seek ye first

"the kingdom of God, and his righteous-

"ness, and all other things (needful) shall

"be added unto you." Serve God; and the

world, in the course of God's providence,

will be made to serve you; and that, some-

times, in a manner very surprising, and un-

looked for.

There is yet a different error in the con-

duct of men. It is when they employ them-

selves to discover the obligations and the

failings of *others*, entirely forgetful of their

own. They can tell you the duties of the

king and of his ministers, and of the ad-

mirals, generals, and governors employed by

them; of both houses of parliament; of

the

DISC. the bishops and the clergy; and of all their
II. neighbours, great and small. They can tell
 the duties of these, respectively; they can
 point out the particulars in which such du-
 ties are neglected; and inform you how the
 neglects may still be remedied. Yet when
 God shall call these censors and judges of
 their brethren to account for their *own* du-
 ties, they will perceive, perhaps for the first
 time, to their utter amazement and confu-
 sion, that they have never once thought of
 performing *them*. To prevent so ridiculous
 and fatal a blunder, let it be observed, that
 St. Paul did not ask, what God would have
others to do; but, "Lord (says he) what
 "wouldest thou have *me* to do?" Shew
 me my own duty, and it sufficeth. Had
 the men, of whom we have been speaking,
 preferred this petition to God, he would
 have taught them, in the first place, to
 bestow much of their time and thoughts
 upon their own concerns, and little upon
 those of others, unless where commanded
 by him so to do, as a part of their own
 duty.

The

The last mistake that shall be mentioned, DISC.
relative to our enquiries after the will of II.
God, is, when we make those enquiries, as
matter of speculation only, as an amuse-
ment of the mind. For to this purpose
are the Scriptures often applied; and it is
possible to make them the subjects of our
writings and conversations, without any de-
sign or desire of reducing them to practice.
Whereas there is no article of faith, which
does not involve in it a corresponding duty.
For, surely, to every one who repeats the
Creed may God justly be considered as say-
ing—"If I be a *God*, where is my wor-
"ship? If I be a *Father*, where is my
"obedience? If I be *Almighty*, where is
"my trust? If I be a *Creator*, where is
"my service? If I be a *Redeemer*, where
"is my love? If I be a *Judge*, where is
"my fear?" In matters of religion, when
there is something to be known, there is
always something to be done. St. Paul
therefore asked, not—"Lord, what wouldest
"thou have me to *know*?" but—"Lord,
"what wouldest thou have me to *do*?"

In

DISC.

II.

In a word—This question, which was thus asked by St. Paul, at the beginning of his conversion, should be asked by us, to the end of our lives, in all circumstances, those more especially that may be new and difficult. When we thus turn our thoughts to God, and sincerely supplicate for the divine direction, by his grace bringing to our minds the instructions in the Scriptures adapted to our case, or by some other means, as he shall see proper, we shall never fail to receive it. Convinced by unanswerable reasons *why* we should *serve*, and having formed a resolution to serve *God*, and him only, we shall never be at a loss to know, *how* we should serve him.

But we cannot follow a safer guide, than when we follow our own church, as she follows the Scriptures; for while she teaches us how to serve God acceptably in public with our lips, she teaches us how to serve him acceptably in private with our lives. The prayers, whereby, at church, we in-treat for grace to perform all the various duties

duties of Christianity, afford the best heads DISC.
of self-examination at home, to discover II.
whether we have used that grace to the
purposes for which it was given; whether
our improvements keep pace with our de-
votions. In the services of the church of
England, we find the faith once delivered
to the saints, and the morality once practised
by them. Truth and holiness are the
characteristics of her ritual. Avoiding the
follies and absurdities of enthusiasm, which
is religion run mad; and superstition, which
is religion frightened out of it's senses; she
keeps the even tenor of her way, in a firm,
manly, rational, cheerful piety towards God,
and an unbounded charity towards man.
Congenial to the spirit of the British mo-
narchy, she has shared of old in it's fall, and
it's restoration. "They have been lovely
"and pleasant in their lives"—May they
continue to be so, to the years of many ge-
nerations!—But, from the aspect which
the times wear toward both, it is easy to
foretel, that whenever the day fatal to one
of them shall come—if come it must—"in
"their deaths they will not be divided."

...of Christianity, afford the best heads of
of self-examination at home, to discover
whether we have used that grace to the
purposes for which it was given; whether
our improvements keep pace with our de-
votions; in the service of the church of
England, we find the faith once delivered
to the saints, and the morality once practised
by them. Truth and holiness are the
characteristics of her temple. Avoiding the
folly and subtleties of enthusiasm, which
is religion without; and superstition, which
is religion frightened out of its senses; she
keeps the even tenor of her way, in singing,
praying, rational, cheerful piety towards God,
and an undoubted charity towards man.
Congregational to the spirit of the British na-
tion, she has thrived on its soil, and
its influence. "The day has been lovely
and pleasant in their eyes." May they
continue to be so, to the years of many re-
tirement! But, from the aspect which
the times wear toward truth, it is easy to
perceive, that whatever the day has to one
of them shall come, it comes to many.
"The seeds they will not be divided."

DISCOURSE III.

FEMALE CHARACTER.

PSALM. LXXVIII. 5, 6.

He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children.

AT a time when the world resounds DISC.
with the noise of war, and the bus- III.
tle of politics, an interval of separation
from it's concerns becomes more than
usually agreeable. We seek and take refuge
in the sanctuary, with double ardour and
delight. Sunday arises upon us in new
beauty, and appears with fresh charms. We
bless God that we have such a day to keep,
and

DISC. and a church to which we may repair,
III. where the weary mind, as well as the
 weary body, may cease a while from it's
 labours, and be refreshed in the multitude
 of peace. The solemnity of the place, the
 decency and propriety of the services, with
 the sight of so many cheerful countenances
 attending in composure and silence to the
 word of God, affect the beholder with un-
 utterable pleasure, and, whatever his senti-
 ments might have been at his first entrance,
 conform him by degrees to the same tem-
 per and behaviour.

This is more especially the case in an as-
 sembly met, as at present, upon the pro-
 motion of a noble and generous design for
 the benefit of our fellow creatures and fel-
 low Christians. Religion, as she descended
 from heaven in original purity, is the
 choicest gift of God to man; and charity,
 though the youngest, is the fairest daughter
 of religion. "Now abide faith, hope, and
 "charity, these three; but the greatest of
 "these is charity"—the greatest, as it is a
 virtue subsisting in the divine mind (where
 faith

faith and hope can have no place), and from thence derived to man; the greatest, as it is the end and crown of the other two; the greatest, as it is immediately connected with happiness, since we cannot do any good to others, without doing more to ourselves, even in our present feelings; and the greatest, as charity will remain, when faith shall be lost in sight, and hope in enjoyment. Not that this virtue will or can then exert itself as it does now. As God himself in another world will be men's portion, and therefore they can *want* nothing, charity will then act inwardly, by making us partake of that happiness which others enjoy, and outwardly, by expressing, in ways suitable to our state, how much we are delighted with their happiness. Where this regard is mutual, as in heaven it must ever be, each person will not only increase his own felicity, but prove the occasion of heightening that of others; so that the principle itself will be eternally strengthening, and the effect which it produces be eternally improving.

DISC.

III.

In the present life, charity principally shews itself in attempts towards removing the hindrances of happiness, or at most in supplying materials for it; and therefore those attempts most deserve encouragement, which extend farthest; which take in both parts of the human composition; and provide, at the same time, for the bodies and the minds of those who are the objects of them; so that while the former appear clothed in the livery of charity, the latter may have put on knowledge as a vesture, and righteousness as a garment.

The following discourse shall be confined to the particular subject of the institution now before us, by first offering some thoughts upon the importance of forming the *female* character by education, and then exhibiting a picture of that character, as it ought to appear, when formed; after which, few words will be required to induce you to support a charity designed for the purpose of forming it.

I. No

I. No pains or expence are spared in teaching *man* knowlege. Not so, in teaching it to woman. But why? Are women incapable of it? By no means. There have been instances to the contrary, in every age: there are many shining ones in the present. They are what they are by education. If ignorant, it is through want of instruction, not of capacity.

DISC.
III.

It may, perhaps, be said, that they are of that sex usually styled and allowed to be the *weaker* sex. So much the more necessity is there, then, for their being strengthened and fortified by sound precepts well inculcated, and good examples set before them.

But do not women that are become learned, make themselves ridiculous? Perhaps they may sometimes, for want of being taught the most useful part of learning, which is *discretion*. But though some do this, others do it not. They know how to manage their learning, when they have

DISC. got it; and possess it, as if they possessed
 III. it not.

Women, however, are not designed to govern the state, or to command armies; to plead in Westminster Hall, or to preach in the Church; and therefore need not study the sciences leading to those several professions. But there are employments suited to them, and to which they ought to be suited; and no small degree of knowledge is required to suit them. The knowledge that is necessary for men, may not be necessary for them; but they are not, for that reason, to be left in ignorance.

A young woman, that is ignorant, will be idle, because she knows not what to do; if she is idle, she will soon be miserable, because, throughout the world, from the highest to the lowest, happiness consists in employment; if she is miserable, she will seek to relieve her misery by wandering abroad, running after shews and diversions. When she is arrived thus far, she may soon
 go

go farther; she may become vicious herself, and then most probably will spend the rest of her life in making others so, that have the misfortune to fall in her way. And how many these may be, who can say? The bad education of women doth generally even more mischief than that of men; since the vices of men often proceed either from the ill education they received at first from their mothers, or else from the passions which other women inspire into them at a riper age.

DISC.
III.

Female influence always has been and always must be very great in the world; and therefore it is in the power of a well educated woman, whatever be her station, to do much good in it.

How valuable to a family is a prudent and faithful *servant* of this sex, and of what vast importance to the temporal interests of a master or mistress has such an one proved! — sometimes to interests of an higher nature. Curious to this purpose is

DISC. the story told in the fifth chapter of the
III. second book of Kings. The Syrians had
 invaded the land of Israel, and, among
 other prisoners, had brought away captive
a little maid, and she waited on the wife of
 Naaman, the king of Syria's general, a
 man of high renown, and in great favour
 at court, but afflicted with a terrible and
 loathsome disease, the leprosy, incurable by
 human means. This servant, who had been
 educated in the true religion, and therefore
 knew the power of the God of Israel, and
 the miracles wrought by the hands of his
 prophets, grieved at the unhappy condition
 of her new master, expressed her wishes to
 her mistress, that he would apply, for help,
 to Elisha. "Would God" (said she) "my
 " lord were with the prophet that is in Sa-
 " maria; for he would recover him of his
 " leprosy." The words were so remark-
 able, that presently "one went in, and
 " told his lord, saying, Thus and thus
 " said the maid, that is of the land of
 " Israel." The consequence was, that the
 general took a journey to the prophet, and
 was

was not only cured of his leprosy, but became a convert to the true religion, and worshipped the God of Elisha. And how often have persons in the highest stations been excited to good, or restrained from evil, at the instance or by the example of an inferior in the train of their own servants, who had been taught in early youth, what *they* perhaps had never learned, or, in the hour of passion, had forgotten!

DISC.
III.

The importance of female education will rise in our opinion, if we consider women as persons who may become *wives*, and *mistresses* of families. In this situation, they have duties to perform, which lie at the very foundation of human life; the support or the ruin of families depends upon their conduct; they have the direction of household affairs; they, consequently, determine the greatest concerns of mankind, and form the good or evil manners of almost all the world. A judicious woman, that is diligent and religious, is the very soul of a house: she gives orders for the good things

DISC. of this life, and for those too of eternity.

III.

Men themselves, who have all the authority in public, cannot yet by their deliberations establish any effectual good, without the concurring assistance of women to carry them into execution. Besides their authority and their continual attendance in their houses, they have the advantage of being by nature careful, attentive to particulars, industrious, insinuating, and persuasive. And how can the men hope for any content in life, if their strictest friendship and alliance, which is that of marriage, be turned into disappointment and bitterness?

But a matter of more weight is still behind. As *mothers*, women have, for some time, and that the most critical time too, the care of the education of their children of both sorts, who, in the next age, are to make up the great body of the world. And as the health and strength, or sickliness and weakness of our bodies, are very much owing to *their* methods of treating us when we were young; so the soundness

soundness or folly of our minds are not less DISC.
owing to those first tempers and ways of III.
thinking, which we eagerly received from
the love, tenderness, authority, and con-
stant conversation of our mothers. As we
call our first language our *mother tongue*,
so we may as justly call our first tempers
our *mother tempers*; and perhaps it may
be found more easy to forget the language,
than to part entirely with those tempers,
which we learnt in the nursery.

That mothers, where they themselves
have been well instructed, are more *capable*,
than men, of teaching their children, will
appear from these considerations—First,
from their circumstances and condition of
life: they are more within doors; have
more time to spare; are best acquainted
with their children's tempers; and always
have them in their eye. Secondly, they
have an advantage from their own make
and frame of mind; they are generally
more apprehensive of danger, and of what
may come hereafter, than men are. This
makes

DISC. makes them more concerned for their

III. children's everlasting welfare, and solicitous to teach them what they know themselves. Then, they are of a milder disposition; can bear with their children's infirmities, and correct them with a tenderness which even recommends a necessary severity. By this means their children come to love them, and to be fond of their instruction, and to imitate their example. Besides all this, they are more patient of this kind of labour than men are. It is not the child's dulness, nor the necessity of often repeating the same things, that will weary or discourage the pious mother. And, which is not to be omitted, she has an opportunity of seeing whether her instructions are apprehended and followed; of destroying vices, while they are in the bud; as also, of encouraging every commendable word and action, in it's season,

In one word—The mothers have an opportunity, both by their instruction and example, of fixing such lasting impressions upon

upon their children's minds, as, by the blessing of God upon their endeavours, neither the iniquity of the age, nor the enemy of mankind, shall ever be able to blot out^a.

Some very remarkable facts, confirming what has been said, deserve your utmost attention.

At this day, the children of Jews are always under the mother's care and instruction, if living, till they come to a certain age; during which time, they are taught to read the law, and so well instructed in it's worth, and aim, and meaning, that they are very hardly, if ever, brought over to

^a "A proper and effectual education of the female sex is one of the very first steps to be taken for the effectual improvement and civilization of the whole empire. For children fall inevitably into the hands and under the care of women, in their infant state: therefore their first and strongest impressions will be good or bad, salutary or destructive, according to the morals, character, and conduct of those women, under whose early tuition they may fall." Dr. BROWN's sketch of a plan of legislation for the Russian empire, given in the *Biographia Britannica*, vol. ii. 664, 2^d edit.

DISC. Christianity, either by the temporal or spiritual advantages which attend it.

III.

One of the deputies, at the synod of Dort, informed that assembly, that in his country, there was scarce a person, how poor and mean soever his condition was, but could read, and give a tolerable account of his faith. This, he said, was owing chiefly to the great care that had been taken to instruct the *women*, who, when they came to be mothers, scarce ever failed to instruct their children.

St. Paul, addressing himself to his beloved Timothy, has these remarkable words — “ That I may be filled with joy, when
 “ I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith
 “ that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy
 “ grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice ; and I am persuaded that in thee
 “ also.” You see, that the faith and piety, here commended and gloried in, were continued and propagated in the family by the *women chiefly*. That “ unfeigned faith,”
 and

and that zeal for the glory of God, which DISC.
III.
was found in Timothy, and which qualified him for a Bishop, or Overseer, in the church of God, was derived to *him* from his *mother* and *grandmother*, whose instruction and examples he followed; and so became an instrument of great good to the world.

Nor are examples wanting among ourselves of virtue and piety, the fear and the blessing of God, continued in families for many generations, by the religious care and concern of mothers, that have had a Christian education; who, however they may excuse themselves from some other labours, which attend the bringing up of their children, if they neglect *this*, are inexcusable; neither the tenderness of their constitution, nor the care of their families (much less the pleasures of the world); neither their quality on the one hand, nor their poverty on the other, will ever free them from the guilt, and infamy, and curse, which will attend those, who shall suffer
their

DISC. their children to grow up, without principles, and without morality.

III.

To the foregoing considerations it may be added, that virtue is not more the business of men, than it is of women, who are the one half of the human race, redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, and designed for eternal life. They are to live for themselves; they have as great a share in the rational nature as men have; they have as much reason to pretend to, and as much necessity to aspire after, the highest accomplishments of a Christian and solid virtue, as the gravest and wisest among Christian philosophers. When we spoil them by a wrong education, we spoil that part of the world, which would otherwise, perhaps, furnish most instances of an eminent and exalted goodness; since they are naturally possessed of tempers and dispositions, which, if duly improved by proper studies, and sober methods of education, would, in all probability, carry them to greater heights of piety, than are to be found among the
generality

generality of men. That women have no DISC
souls, is an assertion, which might proceed III
from the teacher of a *false* religion: by the
Founder of the *true*, they are regarded in
a very different light. To them were com-
municated the first tidings of his resurrec-
tion, and they had the honour to be ap-
pointed apostles to the apostles themselves.

Whether, therefore, we consider the ca-
pacities of women for attaining *knowledge*;
or the sad consequences of their being left
in *ignorance*, their influence on society, as
servants, as *wives*, as *mistresses of families*,
and as *mothers*; or their constituting the
*one half of the human race, redeemed by the
precious blood of Jesus Christ, and designed
for eternal life*; every way is evident the
great importance of forming the female
character by education.—To exhibit a pic-
ture of that character, as it ought to ap-
pear, when formed, was the

II^d Thing proposed.—The picture with
which

DISC. which I shall present you, among other
III. advantages, has that of antiquity. It was
 drawn by a masterly hand near three thousand years ago. It may be necessary therefore to remove some of the effects of time, and retouch the lines that have been clouded and obscured by length of years; in plain terms, to explain some parts of the description, which relate to ancient manners and customs, and shew how they may be usefully applied to those of our own age and country. The description I mean, is that, left us of a virtuous woman, by the wisest of men, in the last chapter of the book of Proverbs; a description, which all mothers and mistresses should teach the female pupils under their care, to read, and learn by heart.

Prov. xxxi. 10. "Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies." Such an one is to be found, but not without some care and diligence in the search. She is well worth the pains taken in

in the forming her, and more to be valued Disc.
by her happy possessor, than all the bright- III.
est diamonds in the mines of the east.

11. "The heart of her husband doth
"safely trust in her, so that he shall have
"no need of spoil." A well nurtured
woman is man's best and truest friend.
Her fidelity is inviolable as the covenant of
the most High, and her purity unsullied as
the light of heaven. Absent, as well as
present, her husband relies upon her, for
the preservation of his possessions, and of
herself, the dearest and most precious of all.
With such a steward at home, freed from
care and anxiety he goes forth to his own
employment, whatever it may be. He has
no occasion to rob others by sea or land; to
plunder provinces, or starve nations. In-
stead of her squandering his substance to
gratify her own vanity and folly, the œco-
nomy of his wife furnishes the supplies,
and nothing is wanting in due time and
place.

DISC.

III.

12. "She will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life." She will never abuse this confidence reposed in her, but endeavour to render herself daily more and more worthy of it. And even if her endeavours should not always meet with the desired success; if the good man should sometimes happen to be a little out of spirits, or out of temper, she will not therefore become so too. Her cheerfulness will revive and restore him. She will still "do him good, and not evil," while he lives; and if she survive him, will continue to shew the same kind attention and regard to his family, and to his character. "My Servius," (said the Roman Valeria, holding in her arms the urn which contained the ashes of her husband—my Servius) "though dead to the rest of the world, can never be otherwise than alive to me."

Solomon's description of a virtuous woman consists of twenty-two verses. It is well worthy your observation, that eleven of these verses (half the number) are taken
up

up in setting forth her *industry*, and the effects of it. I shall recite all these together, DISC:
III.
that you may see what a variety of magnificent language is made use of, to describe her different employments, to recommend simplicity of manners, and make good housewifery and honest labour to be admired, in the rich and noble, as well as the poor and obscure among women. For you must bear in mind, that in works of the several kinds here mentioned, queens and princesses, of old time, disdained not to be occupied. You will likewise be pleased to consider, that if the rich are exempted from the necessity of working for *themselves*, they cannot be better employed than in working for the *poor*; since “the coats and garments,” made by the charity of Dorcas, were judged the best proofs of her goodness, that could be submitted to the inspection of an apostle.

13. “She seeketh wool and flax, and
“worketh willingly with her hands.
“19. She layeth her hands to the spindle,

DISC. "and her hands hold the distaff. 17. She
 III. "girdeth her loins with strength, and
 "strengtheneth her arms. 15. She riseth
 "also, while it is yet night, and giveth
 "meat to her household, and a portion to
 "her maidens. 27. She looketh well to the
 "ways of her household, and eateth not
 "the bread of idleness. 21. She is not
 "afraid of the snow for her household, for
 "they are all clothed with double gar-
 "ments. 22. She maketh herself coverings
 "of tapestry, her clothing is silk and pur-
 "ple. 24. She maketh fine linen, and
 "selleth it, and delivereth girdles to the
 "merchant. 18. She perceiveth that her
 "merchandise is good: her candle goeth not
 "out by night. 14. She is like the mer-
 "chants ships, she bringeth her food from
 "afar. 16. She considereth a field, and
 "buyeth it; with the fruit of her hands
 "she planteth a vineyard." — On account
 of this her marvellous and unceasing dili-
 gence, with the many and great advan-
 tages derived thereby to her family, well
 may it be said, as it is said of her, 25.
 "Strength

“Strength and honour are her clothing, Disc.
“and she shall rejoice in time to come.” III.

But the honour is not confined to herself. It extendeth to her friend and her companion in life; 23. “Her husband is “known in the gates, when he sitteth “among the elders of the land”—That is, he is known as her husband; as a man blessed with such a wife; as indebted, perhaps, for his promotion, to the wealth acquired by her management at home (for honours are seldom open to the poor); for the splendor and elegance of his apparel, to the labour of her hands; and, it may be, for the preservation and establishment of his virtue and integrity, to the encouragement, in all that is holy, and just, and good, furnished by her example, as well as by her conversation, the nature of which is thus described—

26. “She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of “kindness.” She thinks before she speaks;

DISC. and, therefore, neither introduces a bad sub-
III. ject, nor disgraces a good one by an improper manner of discoursing upon it. And as charity reigns in her heart, nothing that is uncharitable proceeds out of her mouth: all is lenient and healing. To express the whole in few words, she says nothing that is foolish, and nothing that is ill-natured. But her charity is shewn in deeds as well as words—

20. “She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.” This is yet another good effect of her œconomy and management. She is not only able to provide plentifully for her household, but has always something in store for the poor. Since what avails a charitable disposition, where vanity, folly, and extravagance have taken away the power to exert it? In vain is “the hand stretched out,” when there is nothing in it.

Having duly considered this finished character

acter of the virtuous woman, we shall not DISC.
be surpris'd at the praise bestowed upon it, III.
in the remaining verses of the chapter.

28. " Her children rise up, and call her
" blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth
" her," saying, 29. " Many daughters have
" done virtuously; but thou excellest them
" all." Happy the children of such a
mother; they will be living proofs of the
care taken by her in their education, when
she taught them to walk, by the paths of
honour and virtue, to the mansions of rest
and glory. Happy the husband of such a
wife, who sees all things prosper under her
direction, and the blessing of heaven de-
rived to his family through her. They will
all join in proclaiming, that among women
who do well, honour is chiefly due to the
virtuous and diligent wife, the affectionate
and sensible mother.

30. " Favour," or rather, " Gracefulness
" is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a
" woman that feareth the Lord, she shall

DISC. "be praised." A graceful person, and a
III. set of fine features, are valuable things,
 but they are not always to be trusted; they
 may conceal tempers and dispositions very
 different from those one should have ex-
 pected to find: and bitterer than worm-
 wood must then be the disappointment of
 the man, who has been directed in his
 choice by no other considerations. This, I
 say, *may* be the case. It is not often so, let
 us hope. God forbid it should. The face
 ought to be an index to the mind, and
 when all is fair without, as it is said of the
 king's daughter in the psalm, "all should
 "be glorious within." But let beauty
 have it's due praise, and suppose what you
 will of it—suppose all that the poets say of
 it to be true: still, the wise man tells you,
 it is *vain*, it is in it's nature transient,
 fleeting, perishing; it is the flower of the
 spring, which must fade in autumn; and
 when the blossom falls, if no fruit succeed,
 of what value, I pray you, is the tree?
 The grave is already opening for the most
 elegant person that moves, and the worms
 are

are in waiting to feed on the fairest face that is beholden. Labour, then, for that which endureth for ever: let your chief pains be bestowed on that part of the human composition, which shall flourish in immortal youth, when the world and all that is in it shall disappear, and come no more into mind.—“A woman that feareth the Lord, “ she shall be praised.”

DISC.
III.

31. “Give her of the fruit of her hands, “ and let her own works praise her in the “ gates.”

The crown, which her own hands have thus formed, shall be placed upon her head, as it were by general consent, even in this life, and her good deeds, celebrated in the public assemblies, shall diffuse an odour grateful as the smell of Eden, as the cloud of frankincense ascending from the holy altar. When her task is ended, the answer of a good conscience, and the blessings all around, sweeter than the sweetest music, shall chant her to her repose; till awakened

DISC. awakened on the great morning of the
III. world, descending angels shall introduce
 this daughter of Jerusalem into the joy of
 her Lord,

Such is the female character, and such the importance of forming it by education. Without education it cannot be formed; for we were all born equally ignorant, and are what we are by instruction. Mothers who have not been themselves taught, cannot teach their daughters; and mothers who are poor, cannot pay for having them taught. Such mothers must be therefore assisted; the children of such mothers, who appear now ranged before you, ask the continuance of your good will and kind assistance, to carry on the work of their education. Be the means of teaching *them*, and they may teach their children after them, to the years of many generations. There is no end of the good that may be thus done. The effects of it may be found upon the earth, when our Redeemer shall return to judgment.

A school

A school of this sort, properly managed DISC.
 and conducted—what is it, but a nursery of III.
 virtue and true religion, from whence will
 come forth, into the church of God, many
 a modest Rebekah, a devout Hannah, a
 wise Esther, an industrious Martha, an
 humble pious Mary; a credit to their own
 age, and a blessing to posterity!

Such a school is a charity of the most
 comprehensive nature.

It is a charity to the whole *nation*, to
 prevent these children from growing up in
 idleness and vice, to be the burden and the
 scandal of a christian country; and to ren-
 der them, on the contrary, useful in their
 stations, and the glory of their times; for
 such are industry and goodness, in the cot-
 tage, as well as in the palace.

It is a charity to this *city*, to hinder so
 many innocent creatures from being tempt-
 ed to walk the streets, or hide themselves
 in ill houses.

It

DISC. It is a charity to *families*; not only to
III. those poor families, out of which these
 children are taken, but to those good families
 into which they shall be hereafter trans-
 planted, for sober, faithful maid-servants;
 and, in time, a charity to their own fami-
 lies, when, by God's blessing, they shall
 be well disposed of in the world; when,
 having become happy wives and mothers,
 they shall govern houses of their own, and
 bring up *their* children in the like nurture
 and fear of the Lord.

That these good effects may be pro-
 duced, the mothers must be warned not to
 detain the children at home a moment
 longer than is absolutely necessary, nor ever
 let them have a bad example before their
 eyes, when they are there.

And as the success of a school must al-
 ways depend on the fidelity and diligence of
 those who are over it, let *them* remember,
 that they receive the pay of charity; and
 that they cannot neglect their duty, with-
 out

out adding this aggravation to their crime, the abuse of one of the best intended institutions in the world. DISC.
III.

But all is at an end at once, unless *you* are pleased to continue your kind subscriptions and contributions. If you withhold your hands, you pull down your own work. Whatever you give at other times, add something now, severally as you can afford — and add it cheerfully; for God loves cheerfulness in giving, as in every thing else. Hard hearts and empty hands he does not love. You owe it to his blessing, that you are not in want yourselves: Of his own do you give him; and how can you bestow it better?—I need not tell the female part of my audience, that, in justice to their sex, *they* are more especially concerned; since they, I am sure, have not forgotten a striking feature in the picture which has been set before them — “She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.”

DISCOURSE IV.

CHRISTIAN UNITY.

2 COR. XIII. 11.

Be of one mind.

THE apostle, in this verse, taking disc.
iv.
leave of his Corinthians, bequeaths to them the same legacy, which the blessed Jesus bequeathed to all his followers. “Peace I leave with you,” said the master; “my peace I give unto you.” “Finally, brethren,” says this his faithful disciple, —“be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you.” Such are the conditions, upon the performance of which, we may hope for the presence of God in the midst of us. He who

DISC. who "maketh men to be of one mind in a
 IV. "house," delighteth to dwell in the house
 where they are so. The spirit of discord
 resides in the world, that scene of confusion,
 that mystic *Babel*. *Jerusalem* is a city at
 unity in itself; and is therefore the habita-
 tion of "the prince of peace."

The *nature* of that duty, which is here
 recommended by St. Paul, appears to be
 sufficiently expressed by the word *concord*,
 or *unanimity*, on which the text is an exact
 paraphrase, *το αὐτο φρονεῖτε*, "Think the
 "same thing," or "be of one mind."

And so necessary indeed is this agreement
 found to be for the prosecution of any de-
 sign, that bad men cannot execute their
 schemes without a temporary concord,
 founded, for want of better principles, either
 upon the mutual interest of all parties, or a
 fantastical kind of honour, which answers
 it's purpose, if it keep them together, till
 the deed of darkness be done, and the prey
 divided. Common robbers and pirates find
 the

the necessity of this. Nay, if Satan's kingdom were divided against itself, it must presently fall. But these are combinations and conspiracies against the welfare and happiness of mankind, with which therefore we are no further concerned, than to learn an useful lesson from our enemies, and to rest assured, that the kingdom of our Master must subsist, as all other kingdoms and societies do, by the cultivation of peace and unity among those who are the subjects of it.

DISC.
IV.

If we take a view of discord, at it's introduction into the world, we shall find that it was threefold. The first between God and man, occasioned by man's transgression of the divine law, which estranged him from his Maker, whom from thenceforth he feared, as "an avenger ready to execute
"wrath upon him that had done evil." The second between man and himself, caused by the accusations of conscience thereupon. The third between man and man,

DISC. owing to unruly desires and passions, con-
 IV. tinually interfering, and never to be satisfied.

In opposition to this threefold discord, introduced into the world by the evil spirit, the concord effected in the church by the good Spirit of God, is likewise threefold. Man is reconciled to God by the righteousness of Christ, through faith; to himself, by the answer of a conscience thus purged from sin; and to his brethren, by christian charity shed abroad in his heart.

All these operations worketh one and the same Spirit; whence the unity, of which we are now speaking, is styled "the unity of the Spirit," which is represented as encircling all things in heaven and earth with a *bond* of peace. And is not the Spirit to the church, or body of Christ, what the breath is to the body natural? While *that* continues in the human frame, the parts, of which it is composed, adhere tenaciously together; but when God taketh away

away the breath, the contexture is soon dissolved, and they turn again to their dust. DISC.
IV.

The inference suggested by this comparison, with regard to any church, whose members are disunited, and crumbled into schisms and factions, is too melancholy to be dwelt upon. When the Spirit came down upon the apostles, on the day of Pentecost, it is said, that "they were all with one accord in one place;" and afterwards, when inspired by him, we are told, "they lifted up their voices with one accord," like the pipes of a musical instrument properly tuned, sounding forth in unison the praises of God.

To induce brethren to "dwell together in unity," God seemeth to have employed every kind of argument. He hath erected both worlds upon the basis of concord, and made harmony to be, as it were, the life and soul of the universe. I shall endeavour to point out some striking examples of its beneficial influences, in the *natural*, the *social*, and the *spiritual* system.

DISC. In contemplating the scenes of nature,
 IV. where indeed there is neither voice nor language, yet it is impossible not to observe, how the elements conspire to serve God, and to bless mankind. St. Clement, in his epistle to the Corinthians, enlarges upon this thought, to the following effect:—The heavens declare the glory of their great Creator, uniformly performing their operations in obedience to his decrees. At the word of the Almighty, the sun ariseth, and knoweth his going down. The heavenly bodies run their appointed circuits in concert, and their motions clash not. Day and night, spring and summer, autumn and winter, in peaceful order give place to, and succeed each other. The earth, without murmuring or disputing, yields her increase at the stated seasons. Winds blow, and waters roll, in subserviency to the will of him who made them; the very waves of the ocean practise submission; they pass not the bounds prescribed them, but under the regulation of that powerful voice which said, “Hitherto shall ye come, but no
 “further,”

“further,” they only serve to fill up the disc.
mighty chorus of inanimate beings, that are iv.
incessantly, in their way, rendering homage
to the Lord of nature. They continue
this day according to his ordinance, for all
things serve him in their several places,
without let, or molestation. Animals and
insects, the least and most defenceless, do
yet maintain, by mutual agreement, their
respective societies, and preserve themselves
from their numerous and potent adversaries.
Thus doth all creation silently reprove the
eccentric motions of contentious men, who
oppose the will of God, and devour one
another.

From a survey of nature, proceed we to
inspect the make and constitution of man
himself, who subsisteth by an union of two
very different parts, a soul and a body, be-
tween which there is a kind of marriage,
not to be dissolved, “till death them do
“part.” They live together, they rejoice
together, they suffer together: and when
parted, as the body loses all it's form and

DISC. comeliness, it's sight, it's hearing, it's voice,
 IV. it's motion, it's very shape, and figure, so
 the soul is described in holy writ as being
 restless and unquiet, till the time of re-
 union comes, crying out, from beneath the
 altar, with anxiety and earnestness, "How
 long, O Lord, holy and true?"

Nor less observable is the union which
 obtains between the members of which the
 body is composed, and by whose mutual
 good offices it is supported and preserved,
 according to the apostle's just and beautiful
 account of this matter — "God hath set
 the members every one of them in the
 body, as it hath pleased him. And if
 they were all one member, where were
 the body? But now are they many
 members, yet but one body. And the
 eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no
 need of thee; nor again the head to the
 feet, I have no need of you — But God
 hath tempered the body together, that
 there should be no schism in the body,
 but that the members should have the
 same

“ same care one for another. And whether D I S C.
“ one member suffer, all the members suf- IV.
“ fer with it; or one member be honoured,
“ all the members rejoice with it.”

It is not more necessary that the members should be joined together in the body, than that mankind should be united in civil society. Man comes into the world utterly helpless, infomuch that, without the care and assistance of others, not a single individual of the human species could be reared, but the earth must be forthwith unpeopled. And therefore it is, that an all-wise Providence has implanted in our nature that affection which is found to prevail between parents and children, between brethren and sisters, between those of the same family, kindred, house, city or nation; between those of the same age, or the same vocation. Such are the means used to invite and almost force men to live in peace and concord, some degree of which God hath made absolutely necessary, by rendering it impossible, as at the beginning he had de-

DISC. clared it was not good, for man to be alone.

IV.

Hence that original union, "instituted and
"ordained by him in the time of man's in-
"nocency," to be the fountain of every
other relation, the source of all those blessings and comforts which result from society.

Thus salutary are the influences of concord in the *natural* and the *social* system. Let us now see how the case stands in that *spiritual* world, of which we became citizens at our baptism.

And here, if we look up, and behold by faith the glory of the eternal Trinity, we must presently fall down, like the elders before the throne, and in the power of the divine majesty worship the unity. "There
"be Three that bear record in heaven, the
"Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost;
"and these three are ONE." Three persons; one God. Three, as evidently appears by the different offices which they have graciously vouchsafed to undertake in the work of our redemption; one in substance,

stance, and duration, and glory, and majesty, and power, and might, and dominion. DISC.
IV.

And as they are one, so all the angels and blessed spirits in the courts of heaven make their sound to be heard as one, in blessing, and praising, and magnifying them, for ever and ever. Not a discordant note is heard in all that celestial choir, while "they rest
"not day or night, saying, Holy, Holy,
"Holy Lord God Almighty, which was,
"and is, and is to come!"

From heaven we descend again to earth, with him who did so, for us men, and for our salvation, to the end that as body and soul are one man, so God and man might be one Christ, who was to live and to die for us; to suffer, and to save; as man to suffer, and as God to save. He could not have suffered, unless he had been man; he could not have saved by suffering, unless he had been God, "God manifest in the
"flesh." By this amazing and most beneficent union, the law was kept, the ransom paid, sin done away, Satan overcome, death
swallowed

DISC. swallowed up, immortality brought to light,
IV. man redeemed, hell confounded, earth made
 to rejoice, and heaven peopled with glorified saints.

By the union of God and man in the person of Christ, another union was effected between Christ and the church. For is the vine united to the branches that spring from it? "I am the vine, ye are the branches." Is the head joined to the body? "God hath made him head over all things, to the church, which is his body." Is there a strict union between man and wife? "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church: we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." By means of this divine junction, the blessings which Christ obtained by his death and passion, become ours. "As the branches cannot bear fruit, except they abide in the vine, no more can we, except we abide in him," and so partake of his root and fatness." From him, as the head, "the whole body of the church,

“ church, fitly joined together, and com- DISC.
 “ pactcd by that which every joint sup- IV.
 “ plieth, according to the effectual work-
 “ ing in the measure of every part, maketh
 “ increafe of the body, to the edifying of
 “ itself in love.” And if we consider the
 church as being espoused to the Lamb, she
 thereby becomes endowed with his excel-
 lencies, she takes his name, and shares his
 unspeakable dignity, his everlasting love,
 and almighty protection. These are the
 happy effects of the union between Christ
 and the church.

One more consequence should follow
 from it, and would to God it were every
 where visible, viz. an union among Chris-
 tians. Joined to one common head, they
 should be joined likewise to each other,
 “ keeping the unity of the Spirit in the
 “ bond of peace. For as the body is one,
 “ and hath many members, and all the
 “ members of that one body, being many,
 “ are one body, so also is Christ. For by
 “ one Spirit are we all baptized into one
 “ body,

DISC. "body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles,
IV. "whether we be bond or free. Ye are the
 "body of Christ, and members in parti-
 "cular." By concord in the church, the
 kingdom of Christ is established on earth,
 as it is in heaven, where there is no rebel-
 lion, or opposition to the will of God, but
 all are unanimous in doing it. By the gos-
 pel, enmity was abolished, and never should
 have been heard of more. All nations,
 however different before in rites, ceremo-
 nies, languages, and tempers, were called
 to the same grace, incorporated into one
 city of peace, and made to communicate
 with each other in holy offices, in prayers
 and in sacraments, in devotion and charity,
 living together in the house of their hea-
 venly Father, and eating of one bread at
 his table. "There is one body, and one
 "Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope
 "of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one
 "baptism, one God and father of all, who
 "is above all, and through all, and in you
 "all."

There

There was a time, and it is pleasing to DISC.
look back to it, when a Christian, furnish- IV.
ed with proper credentials from his bishop,
might travel through the world, from east
to west, and from north to south, and be
received to communion with his brethren,
in any part of the globe then known.
There will be a time, and it is comfortable
to look forward to it, when infidelity, here-
fy, and schism shall come to an end, and
there shall be no contention among the re-
deemed, but in giving glory, and honour,
and thanks to him that sitteth on the
throne. In the mean season, as they will
stand fairest for heaven, who live in con-
cord upon earth, let us consider how we
may best perform this part of our duty.

And here, we may, it is presumed, lay
it down for one rule, that he who would live
in peace and harmony with his brethren,
his kinsfolk, and his neighbours, must
himself be first reconciled to his Maker.
“ Acquaint thyself with God, and be at
“ peace ;” be at peace with him, and thine
own

DISC. own conscience, and then thou shalt be at

IV.

peace with all around thee. Sin is the universal leaven, which by it's fermentation fours the temper. While the mind is troubled and disquieted, unfettled and uncertain with regard to it's spiritual concerns; while it is under the guilt and dominion of a lust, not willing to break it's chain, and yet galled with wearing it; the man will be fretful and peevish, quarrelsome and contentious in his conversation with others, venting the uneasiness which he feels within, on all who have the misfortune to be near him. Whereas, let him "return to "the Almighty" by a deep and hearty repentance, and "put away iniquity from "him;" and a sense of heaven's mercy in effecting his deliverance will quickly "purge "out the old leaven;" joy and love will diffuse themselves into every corner of his heart, which will now overflow with tenderness and kindness towards those with whom he is concerned.

In proof of this assertion, let the appeal
be

be made to a matter of fact within every one's experience. A person coming down from the altar, after having communicated, feels no sentiments but those of fervent charity towards all men. And why? Because having repented him of his sins, and had the pardon of them sealed to him in the holy sacrament, there is then such a sense of God's mercy through Christ impressed upon his soul, as inclines, and even compels him to forgive and love others, as God hath loved and forgiven him. We should justly regard him as a monster, who was, at that time, disposed to hatred and contention. Wherever the Spirit of God comes with the word of reconciliation, strife and animosity presently give place, and disappear. When the eucharist has been celebrated, it is with Christians at the holy table, as it was with the family in the ark; the dove has been there with the olive branch, and the waters are subsided. Only, therefore, let them, from time to time, by proper spiritual exercises, by reading, meditation, and prayer, renew the impressions then made, reducing their religion from a
profession

DISC.
IV.

DISC. profession, put on at stated seasons, to a
 IV. constant uniform principle of action in common life, which gives us the real character of every man; only let this be done, and the tempers, which they bring from the Lord's table, will continue with them, and become those of every day and every hour. The primitive Christians communicated daily, and all Christians should be fit to *communicate* daily, because they should be fit to *die* daily, standing habitually prepared with dispositions of gratitude and duty to their heavenly Father, of love and affection towards their earthly brethren.

A *second* rule for the attainment of concord, shall be this: Let every man endeavour, by the grace of Christ, to moderate his desires of earthly things. "Whence," saith St. James to the Christians of his time, "come wars and fightings among you?" Whence come schisms and heresies in the church, factions and seditions in the state, enmities and heart-burnings between families and individuals? "Come
 " they

“ they not hence, even of your lusts, which D I S C.
 “ war in your members ?” An inordinate IV.
 thirst after power, pleasure, fame, or profit,
 is at the bottom, whatever may be pre-
 tended. The humble and contented man
 quarrels with no body, since, fully satisfied
 with the station in which God hath placed
 him, and intent upon discharging the duties
 of it, he is not eager after any of those
 things, for which others are, with so much
 animosity, contending. But how can we
 wonder that there is strife on earth, when
 we read, that “ there was war in heaven ?”
 nor could peace be restored in those blissful
 regions, till the evil principle, which dis-
 turbed it, was ejected.

The *third* and last rule which I shall
 mention, as proper to be observed for the
 preservation of concord amongst us, is to
 defend the just rights of our ecclesiastical
 establishment, which connects and cements
 us together in one communion, as mem-
 bers of a church happily freed from the
 errors and the corruptions of Rome, and

DISC. put under a government and discipline con-
IV. structed, as far as the times would permit,
upon the platform of primitive Christianity. Those wise and good men, who found it necessary to abolish the usurped jurisdiction of the Pope in these kingdoms, saw plainly at the same time, that religion could not even be *reformed*, as it ought to be, or indeed the very existence of it continued, without proper authority in proper hands. And to argue, that, because a right may be abused, therefore there neither is, nor ought to be, any such right in a community, is a method of reasoning, which, if it could ever pass in the world for sound and conclusive, would soon banish order and peace out of it for evermore. We have no cause to expect, that *angels* should come down from heaven, to take upon them the administration of government; and authority in the hands of *men* must ever, like all other things, be liable to abuse. But he who therefore fancies, it were better there should be none, would find himself strangely mistaken, on making the experiment. The truth is, that
the

the great body of mankind must be directed DISC.
 by some or other, both in temporals and IV.
 spirituals. And the present question really
 is not, whether we shall subscribe to arti-
 cles of religion, but, as it will appear in the
 end, who shall draw them up, and impose
 the subscription; in one word, whether the
 church of England will preserve in her
 hands the power of granting a toleration to
 others, or be reduced to the necessity of
 accepting it from others, if they will grant
 it to her, which it is ten thousand to one
 that they never will, should God, for our
 sins, permit them to effect a change, and
 get into power.

Loud were the clamours, in the last cen-
 tury, against the tyranny of the hierarchy.
 It's demolition was attempted and achieved
 by the advocates for what was then called
religious liberty. When this was done, the
 poor, ignorant, deluded populace expected
 that the kingdom of Christ should imme-
 diately appear, and that from thenceforth
 they should be subject, in matters of con-
H 2 science,

DISC. science, to him only. But how different
 IV. was the event ! The little finger of presbytery proved to be thicker than the loins of prelacy. Those who were of a *different persuasion* were now told, that *toleration was the establishment of iniquity by a law*. And yet the proceedings of presbytery itself were found to be mild and moderate, when compared with the insufferable insolence and cruelty of it's supplanter, independency.

It was proposed, in those days, to make Christians of one heart and mind, and to introduce a heaven upon earth, by the destruction of the church, which, though the only centre of unity, was, at that time, thought to stand in it's way. But so far was this from being the case, that, in the few years between her fall and resurrection, there sprang up a multitude of religious sects, contradicting, reviling, and persecuting each other. Truth was torn in pieces, and blown about by the breath of contending factions, so that a remnant of it was hardly to be found ; and men were either
 driven

driven back to popery, or tempted to an
atheistical disbelief of all religion.

DISC.
IV.

How far the same consequences might follow the execution of a plan for admitting every man into the ministry, who will only declare, in general, that he "believes the Scriptures," which all the heretics of former ages, and all the sectaries of the last century, would at any time have declared—deserves your most serious consideration.

Peace, without all doubt, is an admirable blessing. But in giving up truth for it, we should, in the first place, pay too dear for the purchase, and, in the second, be defrauded, after all, of that for which we bargained.

There are times, when the most peaceable men in the world will find it their bounden duty to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints;" and it is submitted, whether the present be not such a time, since, to erase from our ser-

DISC. IV. vices (if indeed we shall be permitted to have any) the grand fundamental article of that faith, is the avowed end and design of the projected reformation. He who exhorted his Corinthians to be "of one mind," never thought it a matter of *indifference*, whether they were so in the belief and propagation of TRUTH, or of ERROR. To speak out plainly—If Arianism be a truth, it is certainly high time that it were established; but if it be an error, and one of the most pernicious tendency, the church cannot be too vigilant in guarding those fences, which the prevarications and evasions of her adversaries made it necessary to raise for her security. One thing in the history of Arianism is worthy notice, that its partisans, within less than forty years after they had rejected the Nicene doctrine, drew up seventeen different Confessions of faith, and when they had done, would abide by none of them. With what propriety men of this cast are wont to exclaim against *creed makers*, or how well qualified they are to have the modelling of *articles* and *liturgies*, you will determine;

termine; and may God Almighty enable DISC.
us upon this, and every other occasion, as IV.
far as lieth in us, to maintain *truth*, and
preserve *unity*; to reject *error*, and avoid
confusion.

termining, and may God Almighty enable us
us upon this, and every other occasion, as
for as lies in us, to maintain truth, and
preserve unity: to reject error, and avoid
confusion.

And as we are bound by the ties of
Christianity, to love one another, as
ourselves, so we are bound, by the
same ties, to maintain the unity of
the Church, and to preserve the
peace and concord of the same. For
as the Church is the body of Christ,
and we are the members thereof,
so we are bound to love one another,
as we love ourselves, and to maintain
the unity of the Church, and to preserve
the peace and concord of the same.
For as the Church is the body of Christ,
and we are the members thereof,
so we are bound to love one another,
as we love ourselves, and to maintain
the unity of the Church, and to preserve
the peace and concord of the same.

DISCOURSE V.

DUTY OF REPENTANCE ILLUSTRATED.

JER. VIII. 7.

The stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times, and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord.

THE whole passage is well deserving disc.
of attention, both for matter and v.
manner: the matter, of the utmost importance; the manner, to the last degree engaging and affecting.

The day of Jerusalem's visitation drew near: destruction was coming upon her, like a whirlwind out of the north. Jere-
miah

DISC. miah appeared with a commission from
v. above to predict as much, and withal to
 assign the reason. It was—not that the
 people had sinned—more or less all have
 sinned : not that they had grievously sinned
 —all sin may be forgiven : but that having
 sinned, and having grievously sinned, they
 refused to repent, without doing which no
 forgiveness can be obtained ; it cannot in-
 deed be expected. That had happened to
 Israel, which happens often to others :
 temptations to evil had prevailed ; single
 acts had been improved into habits, and
 habits had grown inveterate, till they had
 at length lost the power, and even the de-
 sire, to reform and amend.

In this situation of things, the Almighty
 is introduced, expostulating with his peo-
 ple ; “ Moreover thou shalt say unto them,
 “ Thus saith the Lord, Shall they fall, and
 “ not arise ? Shall he turn away, and not
 “ turn again ?” In the whole circle of
 common life, where men are usually guided
 by common sense, is there any instance to
 be

be found of a similar conduct? Was it ever disc.
seen, was it ever heard, that when a man v.
had experienced the misfortune of falling,
he should not wish and endeavour to arise
again; that when he had, by mistake,
gone out of his way, he should not, upon
better information, be desirous of returning
into it?—"Why then is this people of
"Jerusalem flidden back by a perpetual
"backsliding"—one that is never to cease,
or have an end? "They hold fast deceit"
—and knowing it to be but deceit—for
such every sinner well knows it to be—yet
"they refuse to return."

God is next pleased to speak of himself
(after the manner of men) as inclining his
ear, and with the affection of a parent
fondly listening to catch the first accents of
sorrow and contrition, that should break
forth from the relenting heart of his of-
fending child: "I hearkened, and heard,
"but they spake not aright: no man re-
"pented him of his wickedness, saying,
"What have I done?"—No remorse, no
reflection,

DISC. reflection, no sensibility; hardened in vice,
V. and regardless of danger, they pursued with
 fury and impetuosity their way to perdition;
 "every one turned to his course, as the
 "horse rusheth into the battle."

This earnest expostulation and tender
 complaint are succeeded by a beautiful
 apostrophe to the birds of the air, that
 species of them styled *birds of passage*. They
 by instinct return annually, at a set time,
 to the country they had left; whereas, by
 all the reasoning and all the exhortation in
 the world, obdurate man cannot be pre-
 vailed upon to forsake his iniquity, and re-
 turn to God who made him. "Even the
 "stork in the heaven knoweth her ap-
 "pointed times, and the turtle, and the
 "crane, and the swallow observe the time
 "of their coming; but my people know
 "not the judgment of the Lord."

This is a method of instruction often
 pursued in the Scriptures both of the Old
 and New Testament. "Ask the beasts,
 "and

“and they shall teach you; behold the disc.
“fowls of the air, which sow not, neither v.
“do they reap, nor gather into barns,” yet
can read a lecture to those who do. Thus
the sluggard is sent for information and
correction to the ant, the unthankful to the
ox, the distrustful to the ravens; and here,
the wilful impenitent is placed under the
tuition of the stork and the turtle, the crane
and the swallow. The dumb creatures are
made to reprove the madness and folly of
proud rationals; and the argument enters
forcibly into the understanding, while the
image, under which it is conveyed, delights
the imagination.

The representation of the duty of repentance thus set before us by the prophet, seems peculiarly adapted to the present time of the year, and the solemn season upon which we have just entered, and therefore may suggest some useful considerations on the *nature* of the duty, the *motives* to it's performance, and the *rules* by which it should be conducted.

I. Respect-

DISC. I. Respecting the *nature* of the duty;
v. the similitude adopted in the text directs
 us to consider it as a *return*, a *treading back* our steps, as the birds of passage return, or come back, to the country from which they had departed. And this indeed is the idea generally employed in the Old Testament—"Return, O back-sliding daughter; return from your evil ways; return unto the Lord your God; turn thou us, and we shall be turned;" and the like. But the expression being figurative, it must be opened and explained in literal terms. In order to which, it may be observed, that the word chiefly used in the New Testament to denote the duty of repentance, signifies *change of mind*; and as practice flows from principle (for as a man thinks, so will he act), a change of conduct is naturally and necessarily implied; for we should with difficulty be brought to believe, in any case of moment, that he had changed the former, who did not, in consequence, change the latter also. Now the course of a man's thinking, speaking, and acting, by an easy metaphor, common to all

all ages and countries, is styled his way, in DISC.
which he is therefore said to proceed, ad- V.
vance, return.

We may then define repentance to be,
A change of mind, operating in a change of
conduct. But we shall become still better
acquainted with the nature of it, if we view
it's process, and resolve it into it's several
parts, in due order.

The leading step in the process must of
necessity be *conviction*; since he cannot be
persuaded to repent, who is not first con-
vinced that he has sinned: no man will
think of returning *into* the right way, un-
less he be made sensible that he has wan-
dered *out* of it. To produce this con-
viction, is not so easy a task as at first sight
it may seem to be; since, when evil is pur-
sued, it is pursued under the appearance of
good; by such appearance the sinner for a
time is deceived, blinded, deluded, infatu-
ated; and in this state sometimes continues
to pass his life, through mere indolence,
inatten-

DISC. inattention, want of consideration; whence,
V. in the Latin language, repentance is denoted by a word signifying, *coming to one's self, coming to one's senses, growing wise again*, as before the delusion took place. Conviction is produced gradually. Upon some hint given to a man, either from within or from without, he begins to suspect himself in the wrong; and then, if he be honest enough to prosecute the enquiry, discovers at length that he actually is so. Sometimes it is flashed upon the mind at once—He awakes, and the dream is at an end. Under the direction of that blessed Spirit, whose office, we are told, it is, to “convince, or convict the world of sin,” it is produced by various means, by disappointments, by crosses, by losses, by sickness, by the death of a friend, by a passage in Scripture, or a discourse upon one, by the incidents of common life, or the changes that happen in the natural world; in short, there is hardly a circumstance of so trivial a nature, but that a kind Providence, in some instance or other, has been pleased to make

make it instrumental to this salutary purpose. On the brethren of Joseph, after an interval of more than twenty years, the conviction was wrought by the usage they experienced from him, when unknown, in Egypt. It put them upon reflecting, of what offence they could have been guilty in the former part of life, which might deserve to be punished in this particular manner. Conscience stepped forth, and gave the necessary information. "We are verily guilty concerning our brother; therefore is this distress come upon us." The case of David was of a more obstinate nature. A delineation of his crime under a parable was not sufficient to awaken him. Nothing could do this, but a direct, home, personal application—"Thou art the man."—He started from a deep sleep of ten months, and fell prostrate on the dust, before his God—"I have sinned!"—Let every sinner, when tempted to despair, recollect the answer, and bless the gracious Being from whom it proceeded—"The Lord hath put away thy sin."

DISC. V. The next step to conviction, in the process of repentance, is *sorrow*. — The man who has offended his Maker, and is become thoroughly sensible that he has done so, and of the consequences of his having done so, cannot but be grieved to find himself in such a situation; for which reason, repentance, in the Greek language, is sometimes denominated by a word implying, *after-concern*; indeed, our English term, *I repent*, in the general acceptation of it, is little more than equivalent to, *I am sorry*. If the sorrow arise merely from fear of punishment, it is called, in the language of the Schools, *attrition*, and is deemed the lowest and least honourable species of repentance^a; if from a desire to please God, and a tender sense of having displeased so good a Father, it is styled *contrition*, and is of a more generous and noble kind. The degree of this sorrow is varied almost infinitely by the different temperaments of mind and body in the penitents, and the

^a See Priestley on *the Corruptions*, &c. and Burnet there referred to, ii. 223.

different

different views under which sin presents itself to their several imaginations. And, therefore, the same degree is not to be exacted of all. By enthusiasm it has been not infrequently aggravated even to frenzy and madness. In Scripture it is drawn with an aspect perfectly sober, but yet described, in many instances, as very intense, like that occasioned by the languors of sickness in it's last stage, or the pain arising from dislocated or broken bones, and venting itself in complaints and lamentations, in sighs and tears. Indeed, the prophets exhort us (and, by adopting their expressions into her services, the church directs us actually to assert that we follow their exhortations) to "turn to the Lord our God," not only "with fasting," but "with *weeping*." There are temporal calamities, which can draw tears plentifully from most persons; nay, a fictitious representation of them, we find, can produce the effect. Spiritual ones, perhaps, would do the same, if we felt them as we ought to feel them; as due retirement and meditation would cause us to

DISC.
V.

DISC. feel them; and as we shall one day feel
v. them, when death shall be seen levelling
 his dart at our pillow, and the throne of
 judgment rising to the view, beyond him.
 But, as was before observed, the degrees of
 sorrow, as well as the modes of expressing
 it, will vary, as belonging more to the sen-
 sitive nature, than to the rational. And
 for the avoiding all scruple and doubtfulness
 on this head, it may be laid down for cer-
 tain, that the least degree of sorrow is suf-
 ficient, if it produce a reformation; the
 greatest insufficient, if it do not.

A third step in the process of repentance
 is *confession*. One of an ingenuous mind,
 who is heartily sorry for his offences, will
 not be ashamed or backward to own that
 sorrow. In transactions with a fellow crea-
 ture, we cannot hope that a fault will be
 overlooked, which has not been acknow-
 ledged; or pardon granted, before it has
 been asked. "I said, I will confess my sins
 unto the Lord; and so thou forgavest the
 wickedness of my sin."

A fourth

A fourth step in the process of repentance is *resolution to amend*. A sorrowful confession of what we have done amiss will of course occasion a wish that it had not been done, a desire to undo it so far as it may be possible, and, above all, a resolution not to do the same again, but to take a course directly the reverse of that which we had before taken; in other words, to alter, to reform, to amend our lives.

DISC.
V.

One step more remains, and only one, but that very steep and difficult of ascent, which is, to carry what we have resolved into execution. It is this which finishes and crowns all the rest, being indeed the step, for the attainment of which all the rest were taken, and which therefore renders them of any value, as it shews the penitent to have been sincere in taking them, to have considered them not as efficacious in themselves, but as means to an end—an end, thus, and thus alone to be accomplished.

Such is the *nature* of repentance. It
I 3 begins

D I B C. begins with conviction of sin, passes on to
V. sorrow of the heart, confession of the
 mouth, and resolution of amendment; and
 it terminates in reformation of life.

II. The *motives* to it come now to be
 considered.

Evil to be avoided, and good to be obtained, are the motives, which influence and produce all human actions.

To escape from the rigours and storms of winter, and to enjoy the sweets of a milder and more gracious season, is the instinctive cause, why the heaven-taught monitors, to whom we are referred, migrate from one country to another. It is to avoid the judgments of God, and partake of his mercies, that man is called to repent. The parallel is evident—"The stork, the turtle, the crane, and the swallow, know the time of their returning"—and the *motive* to their return is comprehended and implied in the *time* of it, which is the spring—
 " But

“ But my people know not the judgment DISC.
“ of the Lord;” they know not, they con- V.
sider not that tremendous wintry tempest,
from which they ought to fly, in like man-
ner, by repentance, to the all-enlivening,
cheering, and comforting spring of un-
bounded light and love.

The evil, then, to be avoided, is “ the
“ judgment of God,” consequent upon sin,
and sure to overtake it, if unrepented of.
Sin, which is the transgression of the law,
cannot but be noticed by Him who gave
that law; and if noticed, must be punished,
either in this life, or that which is to come.
No principle can be plainer than this; for
otherwise, a law would serve no purpose but
that of bringing contempt upon the maker
of it. There is not an instance, perhaps,
upon record of any age or nation, where
the idea of punishment has not been con-
nected with that of guilt; and the certainty
of such connection is the great subject of
all the Scriptures.

Sin is often punished in this life; much

DISC. oftener than we are aware; indeed so often,
v. that we may say to you as Moses to Israel:

—“If you have sinned against the Lord,
 “be sure your sin will find you out^b.” We
 see how much this is the case in the sacred
 history, where we are admitted within the
 veil, and the rationale of the divine pro-
 ceedings in particular cases is unfolded to
 us. When we are ignorant of that ra-
 tionale, as, without special information from
 above, we must be, respecting the course
 of God’s ordinary providence in the world,
 it is unsafe, and it may be not only uncha-
 ritable, but unjust, to judge in this man-
 ner of the calamities which befall our
neighbour. But there would be no harm,
 when calamities befall *ourselves*, if we
 should take a retrospect of our conduct,
 and in that conduct endeavour to discover
 the cause that might have induced our hea-
 venly Father to send them. It will not be
 saying too much, I believe, to say, that
 many times, if the search were made with
 diligence and fidelity, we *should* discover

^b Numb. xxxii. 23.

it: at least, were we not able to particularize, we should discover enough in general to satisfy us, that, be our sufferings at any time what they may, we do not suffer more than we deserve to suffer; but that each of us, without any tincture of superstition or hypocrisy, may from heart-felt conviction exclaim, with the good Psalmist, "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and thou, of very faithfulness, hast caused me to be troubled."—Every fresh instance of this sort is indeed only a fresh confirmation of that grand and most important truth, which should ever be uppermost in our thoughts, that, all natural evil is the consequence and punishment of moral. Remove the latter by repentance, and God will remove the former, when he sees that it has performed the work, and produced the effect intended.

It would be in vain, however, to dissimble, that, in the present state, as is the offence, such is not always the punishment. Notoriously profligate sinners often partake
not,

DISC. not, to appearance, the common evils of
 V. life, but pass their days in prosperity, affluence, and health, and die without any visible tokens of the divine displeasure. The fact is indisputable; and it was a stumbling-block by very good men of old time not without great difficulty surmounted. The conflict occasioned by it in the human mind is described at large in the lxxiii^d Psalm, and in the xiith chapter of our prophet Jeremiah; nor will believers fail sometimes to experience a temptation of a similar nature, while the object shall continue to present itself, that is, while the world shall last.

To take off, in some measure, the force of the objection, it must be remarked, that, besides those judgments of God, which lie open to the observation of mankind, there are others, even in the present life, of a secret and invisible kind, known only to the party by whom they are felt. There is a court constantly sitting within, from whose jurisdiction the criminal can plead

no exemption, and from whose presence DISC.
he cannot fly; there is evidence produced V.
against him, which he can neither dis-
prove nor evade; and there, a just sentence
is not only passed, but forthwith exe-
cuted upon him, by the infliction of tor-
ments severe and poignant as the strokes of
whips or scorpions; torments, exquisite in
proportion to the sensibility of the part af-
fected; torments, of which he sees the be-
ginning, but is never likely to see the end.

Trust not to appearances. Men are not
what they seem. In the brilliant scenes of
splendor and magnificence, of luxury and
dissipation, surrounded by the companions
of his pleasures, and the flatterers of his
vices, amidst the flashes of wit and merri-
ment, when all wears the face of gaiety and
festivity, the profligate often reads his
doom, written by the hand, whose charac-
ters are indelible. Should he turn away
his eyes from beholding it, and succeed in
the great work, during the course of his
revels, yet the time will come, when from
scenes

DISC. scenes like these he must retire, and be
V. alone: and then, as Dr. South states the
 question, in a manner not to be answered,
 “What is all that a man can enjoy in this
 “way for a week, a month, or a year,
 “compared with what he feels for one
 “hour, when his conscience shall take him
 “aside, and rate him by himself?”

There is likewise another hour which
 will come, and that, soon—the hour when
 life must end; when the accumulated wealth
 of the East and the West, with all the as-
 sistance it is able to procure, will not be
 competent to obtain the respite of a mo-
 ment; when the impenitent sinner shall be
 called—and must obey the call—to leave
 every thing, and give up his accounts to
 his Maker, of the manner in which he has
 spent his time, and employed his talents.—
 Of what is *said* by such, at that hour, we
 know not much. Care is generally taken
 that we never should. Of what is *thought*,
 we know nothing.—O merciful God, grant
 that we never may!

It

It will still be alleged; perhaps, that instances are not wanting of the worst of men, in principle and practice, going out of life with no less composure than the best. I believe these instances to be very rare indeed. But admit the allegation, that there are some; what do they prove? What can they prove? Why, certainly, unless all that has been conceived and uttered by the wise and good of every age, concerning God and religion, right and wrong, virtue and vice, truth and falsehood—unless all this be a mere dream, they can prove only that such persons die in a state of ignorance, stupidity, or judicial blindness, with hardened hearts, and seared consciences. When the drunkard ceases to feel in the morning the usual pains and penalties of his last night's debauch, he fancies the strength of his constitution has triumphed over the mischief of intemperance, and that the bitterness of death is past. Alas, poor man! The fact is, that his constitution, by his ill treatment of it, has lost the sense of natural good and evil,
implanted

DISC. implanted in it for it's preservation; he has
V. no longer that motive left to reformation,
 and is therefore sealed up to perdition,
 which is coming upon him, fierce, speedy,
 and irresistible, like an armed man.

But however, by habits either of sensuality or infidelity, the conscience may be drugged, and laid asleep in this world, let it not be forgotten, that (whether some men believe so much or not) there is another world beyond this, in which it must awake, to sleep no more. And if in this world some sins are punished, as we have assurance they are, while others of far greater magnitude and more atrocious guilt are permitted to go unpunished, it will follow, by a consequence which the wit of man cannot gainsay, should he study for a thousand years to do it, that such sins, not being punished *here*, will most inevitably be punished *there*. Else were God unrighteous indeed!—As touching the nature of those after-punishments, I shall only say (the misgivings and forebodings of him
 who

who has deserved them will speak the rest) D.T.S.C.
that they are such as will be inflicted, after v.
the expiration of the day of mercy, by inexorable justice, and almighty power.

We have taken a view of the evil to be avoided by repentance. It consists in the temporal judgments of God, the terrors of a guilty conscience, and the pains of eternal death.

The good to be obtained needeth only to be mentioned in very few words. It must have offered itself to your thoughts, as we passed along, branching into these opposite particulars—

—The light of heaven shining upon our tabernacle, the divine favour attending us and ours, through every stage of our existence, sanctifying prosperity, which by the displeasure of God may be rendered a curse, and turning adversity itself into a blessing, while it becomes an instrument to rectify
the

DISC. the disorders of our minds, to soften the
v. few hard places remaining in our hearts, to
 smooth and lay even the little roughnesses
 in our tempers; thus gradually and gently
 preparing us for our departure hence, and
 fitting us for the company, to which we
 are going, of “the spirits of just men
 “made perfect.”—

—The answer of a good conscience,
 diffusing peace and serenity over all the
 powers and faculties of the soul, refresh-
 ing like the dew falling on the top of
 Hermon, exhilarating as the fragrance of
 the holy oil descending from the head of
 Aaron; sweetening the converse of society,
 and the charities of active life, and afford-
 ing in retirement and solitude pleasures
 concealed from the world around us, joys
 in which “a stranger intermeddleth not;”
 enlivening the morning, brightening the
 noon, and gilding the evening of our days;
 effecting what is so difficult to be effected, and
 what nothing else can effect, at once making
 life

life pleasant, and death desirable, as leading DISC.
to something still superior to all we feel V.
here below—

—The reward in heaven, the glory that shall be revealed, to be known only when it shall be revealed; the bliss without alloy, and without end, which he cannot conceive who has not experienced, and which he who has experienced can find no human language able to express.

Such evil is to be avoided, and such good to be obtained, by repentance, that plank remaining to a shipwrecked world, on which alone we can escape to the haven of rest. All have sinned, and therefore, in order to be saved, all must repent. It is surely the least they can do; and to those who do this, through faith in the blood of Christ purifying the conscience from sins past, and the power of the Spirit of Christ supporting and carrying them on for the time to come, exceeding great and precious promises, comprehending and confirming

DISC. all that has been advanced, are made in
v. every part of Scripture, which, before this
 audience, there is no occasion to recite.

III. Some short *rules* shall be laid down
 for the conduct of our repentance through
 the several parts, of which, under the first
 head of this discourse, we have shewn it to
 be composed; that so it may be made to
 answer the character already given of it's
 power and efficacy, under the second.

1. *Stifle not convictions.* The world,
 through all it's vicissitudes, natural, politi-
 cal, and moral, the casualties of youth,
 and the increasing infirmities of age, is
 full of warnings and admonitions. Day
 unto day sheweth this speech, night unto
 night uttereth this knowlege. We hear,
 but resolve to forget. Many of the em-
 ployments and most of the amusements of
 life are engaged in, that man may fly from
 himself, and from his own thoughts. At-
 tend to every suggestion of this salutary kind,
 from what quarter soever it may proceed:
 attend,

attend, and slight it not. It is the voice of DISC.
God calling you to repentance. Listen, V.
and obey.

2. *Be serious.* The subject will cause any man to become so, who considers it as he ought to do; who reflects, what sin is in the sight of God, what sorrows it occasioned to the Son of God, what destruction it hath brought upon the world, and is about to bring upon himself, unless prevented by a timely repentance. Memorable are the words of a great statesman of our own, when, because he seemed pensive and thoughtful, towards the close of his days, some court buffoons were sent to divert him. “While we laugh, all things are serious about us. God is serious, when he preserveth us, and hath patience towards us. Christ was serious, when he died for us. The Holy Spirit is serious, when he striveth with us. The Scripture is serious, when it is read before us. Sacraments are serious, when they are administered to us. The whole creation is serious, in

DISC. “serving God and us. Angels are serious
 V. “above, while they wait for our conversion.
 “Evil spirits are serious below, in endeavouring to effect our destruction—And
 “shall Man not be serious, who of all
 “other creatures hath most reason to be so?”

3. *Be frequent in confession.* The church enters upon her service with it in public, and every one should do the same in private. If you feel not that warmth of devotion you could wish to feel when you begin, you may experience it before you end your confession. The very repetition of proper sentiments in proper language will produce the affections which they are intended to express. Begin, as an act of obedience to him who has assured us, that,
 “if we confess our sins, he is faithful and
 “just to forgive us our sins.” Such an act of obedience may be rewarded with every thing else that is necessary—“This I had,
 “because I kept thy commandments.”

4. *Resolve speedily.* Fruitless is sorrow
 for

for having done amiss, if it issue not in a resolution to do so no more. And in forming this resolution, no time is to be lost. He who doth not resolve to-day, will be much less disposed to resolve to-morrow. Procrastination in many cases is dangerous: in this it is often fatal.

DISC.
V.

5. *Renew your resolutions daily.* Else will they be soon forgotten, and consequently never carried into execution. It is the interest of the passions that they should be forgotten. Cares and pleasures will be apt to efface them; temptations will return, and prevail; a relapse will be the consequence; and all the work must be entered upon anew, with difficulties increased, strength diminished, and courage appalled. To prevent this from happening, no better method can be devised, than every day to renew the impressions once produced. During so short an interval, the enemy can make no very considerable breach in the works—none but what may be easily repaired, and put again into a state of defence.

DISC. But after all—"Except the Lord keep
v. "the city, the watchman waketh but in
"vain." It is he who granted repentance
unto life; and it is he who alone can perfect
the good work, when it is begun in us.
To him therefore let prayer be made, without
ceasing, at morning, and at evening, and at
noon day, and that instantly. And when can
we with more propriety or more effect prefer
our petitions, than at this time, that He would
be pleased to prosper the word that hath been
spoken, to the purpose for which it hath been
spoken; that they who have not yet begun their
repentance may forthwith begin it; and that they
who have begun it may be enabled happily to
complete it; that all may make a due use of the
present holy season, which to many may perhaps
return no more; and no single person leave this
place liable to the reproach of God by his prophet,
that, when "the stork in the heavens knoweth
"her appointed time, and the turtle, the
"crane, and the swallow, know the time
"of their coming"—he should not "know
"the judgment of the Lord."

DISCOURSE VI.

THE DEVOUT SOLDIER.

ACTS X. 31.

*Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are
bad in remembrance in the sight of God.*

IN the histories of this world we read DISC.
of conquests gained by the sword and VI.
spear; we view the celebrated heroes of
ancient and modern times marking out their
progress through kingdoms and empires
with havoc and desolation, while *every bat-*
tle of those warriors is with confused noise,
and garments rolled in blood. How different
the scenes presented to us in that portion of
sacred story, styled "The Acts of the Apostles," or the exploits of those who were

DISC. sent forth to subdue the world to the obedience of Christ! Here too we read of conquests; but they were gained by faith and patience, by prayers and sermons, by meekness and long suffering. Here we behold a mighty prince making his progress upon the earth; but that prince is *the prince of peace*, and his progress is the progress of salvation: he makes war only against the unruly passions and affections of sinful men, and all his desire is, to command a willing people in the day of his power.

Hitherto the apostles, in compliance with their orders, had confined themselves to the Jews, as the Gospel must be first preached to that once highly favoured people. But now the hour was come, when the great mystery of divine mercy, the call of the nations, should begin to be unfolded, and God would shew some specimen of the riches of his grace reserved in store for the heathen world. St. Peter was therefore sent, with the glad tidings of a Saviour,

Saviour, to Cornelius, a Roman centurion, on the circumstances of whose call and conversion, as they are very particularly related in the chapter from whence the text is taken, I shall proceed to offer some considerations, which, it is hoped, may be of use to us all.

DISC.
VI.

“ There was a certain man in Cæsarea,
“ called Cornelius, a centurion of the band
“ called the Italian band, a devout man,
“ and one that feared God with all his
“ house, which gave alms to the people,
“ and prayed to God alway.”

From the name and profession of Cornelius, it appears that he was a Roman, and, consequently, a heathen. But the character here given of him makes it evident that he must have been in some sort a convert to Judaism, and instructed out of the law; otherwise the Holy Ghost would not have called him *a devout man*; he could not be said to have *feared God*, that is, the true God, whom, as a heathen, he could not know,

DISC. know, much less worship and serve by
VI. *prayer and alms-deeds.* He was therefore one of those who were styled *Profelytes of the gate*, not circumcised, and made complete Jews, but taught the general principles of true religion, the knowlege of God, and a Saviour who was to come, and permitted to attend and offer up their devotions in the outer court of the temple, at the times of sacrifice. The Ethiopian nobleman, who came to Jerusalem to worship, and was baptized by Philip, must have been in the same state with Cornelius, and so became prepared, like him, to receive the Gospel, when it was preached to him.

1. God Almighty hath his servants in all places, and in all conditions, even those wherein one would least expect to find them. The profession of a *soldier* is generally thought very unfavourable to religion, however it comes about; for certainly, if there be any one man to whom religion is more necessary at all times than it is to another, a soldier is that man. His life is
always

always in his hand, always liable to be taken from him, therefore should he not forget *God's law*. Death besets him on every side, in its most terrible forms, and threatens, each moment, to call him away to judgment; therefore it behoveth him to stand ready, with his accounts prepared. A sect that arose here in England during the last century, held it unlawful to bear arms, but without grounds. For when the soldiers applied to that most rigorous and austere of preachers, St. John the Baptist, he did not exhort them to quit their profession, as he would doubtless have done, had it been unlawful in itself, but only recommended a proper behaviour to them: *Do violence, says he, to no man, and be content with your wages*. So that there is no natural or necessary connection between irreligion and the profession of a soldier. On the contrary, true religion never appears to more advantage than it doth in that character. It pleased God to accept a person of the military profession as the first fruits of the Gentile world. And he must be a person of
very

DISC.

VI.

DISC. very little sensibility, who is not charmed
VI. with the account given us of Cornelius, an
 officer in the Roman army.

2. *He was a devout man*—not only what the world calls “a decent character, a good “sort of a man,” by which is often intended a goodness with no religion, and very little morality; but a thoroughly pious man, one that *feared God*, that set God always before him, and regarded *him* in all he said and did. Such a fear is the first and principal part of divine wisdom, and it is peculiarly excellent in a soldier, because he who fears God as he ought to do, will fear nobody else. True courage must be founded in true religion, for a bad man cannot be a brave man, with his eyes open, and his thoughts about him. Nor could a general give a better exhortation to his army, than that given by Christ to his disciples; *Fear not them which kill the body, and, after that, have no more that they can do; but I will forewarn you whom you shall fear. Fear him who, after he hath killed,*
hath

hath power to destroy both body and soul in DISC.
hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him. And VI.
an heathen historian*, who was himself a
great commander, could say, that “the
“soldier who first serves God, and then
“obeys his captain, may confidently hope
“to overcome his enemy.”

3. *Cornelius feared God, with all his house.*
Piety, like the sun, communicates itself to
all around it. Every family is a little king-
dom, of which the master is prince; it is
a little flock, of which the master is shep-
herd, appointed by heaven to govern it in
righteousness, and to guide it in the way of
peace. Such is the true use of that power
which God hath granted unto men, from
him that ruleth over millions, to him that
hath only a single servant. The manners of
a family depend upon those of the master.
His principles and practices soon diffuse
themselves through the house, and the piety
or profaneness, the sobriety or intemperance,
the sloth or diligence of servants, discover

* Xenophon.

DISC. to the world the nature of that fountain
VI. from which they flow. *Cornelius feared God, with all his house.* He set a good example, and took care that they should follow it. He honoured the name of God himself, and it was not blasphemed by his domestics. While he was proceeding to heaven, he did not send them, or let them go to hell, but carried them all with him. He feared God, with *all* his house; there was not one wicked or disorderly person in it. And now, recollect who this man was. He was a soldier; he was a Roman. How will his example, in this respect, be held up at the day of judgment, to the shame and condemnation of Christians, who have never once thought of following it!

4. *Cornelius gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always.* True religion consisteth in the love of God, and of man for God's sake. The former shews itself in the exercise of piety; the latter in that of charity. One leads us to God, as the only person who can supply our wants; the other

other induceth us to supply those of our neighbours. Prayer is powerful, and alms are powerful, and when they join their forces, omnipotence itself is pleased to be overcome by them. Alms give wings to prayer, causing it to ascend swiftly toward heaven; and prayer gives strength to alms, enabling them to follow after, till they enter the everlasting doors together, and present themselves before the most High. They rise, like vapours, from the earth, and return again, like them, with a blessing. But in order that they may produce this effect, a man must not be niggardly in his alms, he must not be inconstant in his prayers. "Cornelius gave *much* alms to the people, and prayed to God *always*," that is, at all the stated and proper times of prayer.

5. From the account which Cornelius gives of himself to St. Peter at the latter end of the chapter, it appears, that he was accustomed to join *fasting* to prayer. "Four days ago," says he, "I was *fasting*
" until

DISC. "until this hour." Prayer is an ascent of
VI. the soul to God. The corruptible body
 presseth down the soul, and hinders it in
 it's ascent. The more that body is fed and
 pampered, the more it clogs and weighs
 down the soul. Abstinence from food,
 therefore, has been enjoined by God, and
 practised by his people, both Jews and
 Christians, among other ends, for the in-
 crease and furtherance of devotion. And
 experience will soon teach us the wisdom
 and fitness of such injunction; for there is
 not more difference between one man and
 another, than there is between the same
 man and himself, when full, and when
 fasting; before his meals, and after them.
 Fumes from the stomach arise into the
 head; they cloud the understanding, and
 render the mind dull and heavy; they make
 a man unfit for the business of this world,
 much more for that of another. From
 Cornelius we learn therefore, what he must
 have learned from the people of God, that
 indulgence puts an end to devotion, and
 abstinence is the best preparative for prayer.

6. Cornelius

6. Cornelius was praying in his house at the ninth hour of the day, when he saw in a vision evidently an angel of God coming in unto him, and saying, "Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God." The ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon, was one of the hours of prayer among the Jews, and the observation of it by Cornelius shews, that he must have been instructed in their religion. At this hour it was, that a new and unexpected guest entered his apartment. A Spirit from the regions of the blessed came down and visited him. Glorious was his appearance, and his garments were of the colour of the light. "A man in bright clothing" (says he) "stood before me." The message which this divine visitant brought, was one full of grace and comfort; cheering and refreshing as the dew of heaven, when it falls upon the grass of the field. "Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God." Such are the blessings which at-

DISC.

VI.

DISC. VI. tend the pious and charitable man. "God
 " is not unrighteous, that he should forget
 " his work and labour of love." His good
 deeds are done upon earth, but, like a cloud
 of incense from the holy altar, they ascend
 to heaven, and rise in sweet remembrance
 before the throne. We do not indeed ex-
 pect angels from above, to assure us of this.
 We should be unreasonable if we did; for the
 word of God speaks to our faith, as plainly
 as the angel did to Cornelius; it cries aloud
 to every true penitent, and sincere believer,
 "Thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are
 " had in remembrance in the sight of God."
 And he who, like Cornelius, "giveth much
 " alms to the people, and prayeth to God
 " alway," at the appointed seasons, will find
 a joy and comfort in so doing, which may
 answer the same purpose with the appear-
 ance and message of the angel.

7. But the angel has something more to
 say to Cornelius—"And now, send men
 " to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose
 " surname is Peter: he shall tell thee what
 " thou

“thou oughtest to do.” Two questions may here be asked. First, How could Cornelius please God, not having faith in Christ? Secondly, If he pleased God without faith in Christ, what more could he do, with it? A short state of the case will afford us a satisfactory answer to both these questions. That Cornelius had faith in the true God, the God of Israel, appears from the manner in which he worshipped, and from the whole conduct of his life. This faith he must have received from the Jews, and from their Scriptures. By them it is more than probable that he had been made acquainted with God’s merciful intention of redeeming mankind by a Saviour, who was to come. Nor is it possible to suppose, that he should have lived any time in Judea, without having heard the common reports concerning Jesus of Nazareth, his wonderful works, his death, and resurrection. Nay, St. Peter, addressing himself to Cornelius and his friends, says, “The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, that

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DISC. "word, I say, *ye know*, which was published throughout all Judea," &c. But whether Jesus were indeed the person foretold, the Messiah in whom he must believe, and on whom he must rely for salvation, of this point Cornelius, like many of the Jews themselves, might be ignorant, or doubtful; the Gospel not having been yet preached to him by any of the apostles. He was therefore ordered to send for St. Peter, who would inform and convince him of so important a truth. The Gospel was necessary for Cornelius, in the same manner that it was necessary for the whole Jewish church. They believed in the Messiah to come; it was necessary they should acknowledge him, when he did come; otherwise, their belief would have become unbelief, as unhappily was the case with the greater part of that nation, who were accordingly punished and destroyed, as unbelievers. Had Cornelius rejected the Gospel when preached, and opposed Christ when made known to him, he would have been in the same case with them. From that

that moment, he had commenced an enemy DISC.
to God, because an enemy to his Son; and VI.
therefore God would have been an enemy
to him. But far different were his tempers
and dispositions, resembling those of the
believing Jews, who, like old Simeon, only
waited for the manifestation of the Saviour,
ready to embrace him as soon as he appear-
ed. The talent committed to him he had
improved to the utmost; the knowlege ob-
tained had been reduced to practice; and
“to him that hath shall be given.” So the
angel directed him to the apostle, and the
apostle to Christ. The angel did not him-
self convert and baptize Cornelius; for the
dispensation of the Gospel was committed
not to angels, but to men; and all things
must be done “in order,” as God has
thought proper to appoint in the church.
“Send for Simon, whose surname is Peter;
“HE shall tell thee what thou oughtest to
“do.” An angel may come from heaven,
but he will send us to an *apostle* for in-
struction.

DISC. 8. An opportunity of being instructed
VI. in his duty, of being *told what he ought to do*, was not, in the opinion of Cornelius, to be lost, or hazarded. He “made haste, “and prolonged not the time.” No sooner had the heavenly visitant left him, but “he “called two of his servants, and a devout “soldier of them that waited on him continually;” for such he chose to wait on him, having adopted David’s rule, in the establishment of his household — “Mine “eyes shall be upon the faithful of the “land, that they may dwell with me: he “that walketh in a perfect way shall serve “me.” To these intelligent and well disposed domestics he related all that had happened, and dispatched them forthwith to Joppa. Happy the master, who hath such servants! Happy the servants, who have such a master! Happy he who sends, and they who are sent upon such an employment!

9. The admission of the Gentiles into the church of God, to enjoy it’s privileges,
 and

and share it's blessings, was a doctrine DISC.
against which all the passions in the breast VI.
of a Jew were armed, notwithstanding the
many clear and evident predictions in it's
favour. The Israelitish church (as churches
and sects are but too apt to do) had fondly
arrogated to itself an exclusive right to the
divine promises, forgetting to reflect, that
those promises were not absolute, but con-
ditional ; that they were not made to the
persons of men, but to their faith ; so that,
when a Jew ceased to believe, he would
cease to be an heir of the promises ; and
when a Gentile began to believe, he would
immediately begin to be so. There was a
time, when no such distinction existed, as
that of Jew and Gentile, but the descend-
ants of Noah were upon an equal foot of
favour and acceptance. The apostasy of
the nations to idolatry occasioned the dis-
tinction, and therefore an unprejudiced
mind must have perceived at once that
their repentance and reformation would, in
course, abolish it again. The father only
waited the return of the prodigal, to re-

DISC. admit him into his family. In the mean
VI. time, the children of Abraham were selected, to preserve the truth, and faith in that truth, because they were the believing children of a believing parent. The light, which otherwise must have been extinguished, was placed in that candlestick; but it was placed there, to give light to all, who should, at any time, come into the house. Never, surely, was there a dispensation more wise, or more gracious! But it offended the Jews, as opposing their family and national prejudices, which were not without some difficulty effaced from the minds of the apostles themselves; inso-much that, while the messengers of Cornelius were upon the road, it was judged necessary to prepare St. Peter for their arrival, by a figurative and scenical representation, and that thrice repeated, of the great change which was about to take place in the world, by the conversion of the Gentiles, and their adoption into the family of the faithful. For this purpose, while engaged at his devotion, he was cast into a trance—"He saw
" heaven

“ heaven opened, and a certain vessel de- disc.
 “ scending unto him as it had been a great vi.
 “ sheet, knit at the four corners, and let
 “ down to the earth ; wherein were all
 “ manner of four-footed beasts of the earth,
 “ and wild beasts, and creeping things, and
 “ fowls of the air. And there came a
 “ voice to him, Rise, Peter ; kill, and eat.
 “ But Peter said, Not so, Lord ; for I have
 “ never eaten any thing that is common, or
 “ unclean. And the voice spake unto him
 “ again the second time, What God hath
 “ cleansed, that call not thou common.”

This vision is evidently formed upon the legal distinction of clean and unclean creatures, which are here made to represent, as probably they were always intended to do, by their different properties and qualities, the corresponding different tempers and dispositions of good and bad men, believers and unbelievers, Jews and Gentiles ; so that by the union of clean and unclean in the mystical sheet, which contained *all manner* of creatures, was denoted the purification of the Gentiles by faith, who were once
 unclean,

disc. VI. unclean, and their junction with the believ-
ing Jews, in the Christian, or universal
church. The purport of the vision, thrown
into prophetic language, would run thus :
 —“ The *wolf* shall dwell with the *lamb*,
 “ and the *leopard* shall lie down with the
 “ *kid*, and the *calf* and the *young lion* and
 “ the *fatling* together : the *cow* and the
 “ *bear* shall feed, and their young ones shall
 “ lie down together ; and the *lion* shall eat
 “ straw like the *ox*. And the sucking
 “ child shall play on the hole of the *asp*,
 “ and the weaned child shall put his hand
 “ on the *cockatrice*’ den. They shall not
 “ hurt nor destroy in all my holy moun-
 “ tain ; for *the earth shall be full of the*
 “ *knowledge of the Lord*, as the waters cover
 “ the sea. In that day there shall be a root
 “ of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign
 “ of the people ; *to it shall the Gentiles*
 “ *seek.*” — The arrival of those who were
 sent from Cornelius, and the injunction of
 the Spirit, “ Arise, and get thee down, and
 “ go with them, nothing doubting, for I
 “ have sent them,” fully satisfied Peter, as

to

to the intention of the heavenly vision; and, in his own mind, he readily applied to Jew and Gentile, what he had seen and heard concerning the clean and unclean animals.

DISC.
VI.

10. Cornelius, in the mean time, impatiently waited the return of his faithful messengers; and, with a truly open and liberal spirit, desirous that others should partake of the good which heaven had sent him, he “had called together his kinsfolk “and near friends,” that they likewise might hear the word of life; as knowing, it is with the grace of God as with the light of heaven, of which no man has the less, because a million of his brethren enjoy it as well as he. There is enough for all the world, and every individual has as much as he is capable of receiving.

11. As Cornelius had been ordered by an angel from heaven to send for Peter, it was natural for him to regard the apostle in the highest light; and therefore, when he

DISC. he had the happiness to behold him entering his doors, “he fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; for I myself also am a man”—one encompassed with the infirmities of mortality, like yourself; a fellow creature, whose duty it is to join with you in the worship of him, to whom alone worship is due. This is one part of St. Peter’s conduct, among many, which his pretended successors in the see of Rome have not been solicitous to imitate; or we should never have heard of the style, *Dominus Deus noster, Papa!*

12. By the opening of St. Peter’s address to Cornelius and his friends, it appears, that he understood the vision as we have above explained it. “Ye know,” says he, “how that it is an unlawful thing for a man, that is a Jew, to keep company and come unto one of another nation: but God hath shewed me,” that is, plainly, by the creatures in the sheet, “that I should not call any MAN common,
“ or

“*or unclean.*” The creatures, therefore, DISC.
VI.
represented *men*, and to mankind, as divided into Jews and Gentiles, St. Peter transferred the ideas suggested by the animals, distinguished into clean and unclean. He goes on to declare himself at length convinced, “that God is no respecter of
“persons, but in *every nation* he that fear-
“eth him, and worketh righteousness, is
“accepted with him;” that is, the partition wall is broken down, and people of *every nation*, as well as the Jewish, are accepted, upon the same terms of faith and obedience, whenever, by God’s grace, they come into them, as Cornelius did, and as the whole heathen world afterward did, upon the publication of the Gospel. “God
“is no respecter of persons;” he does not shew favour to the Jews because they were the children of Abraham, if, by rejecting the gospel, they cease to believe and act like Abraham, which if the Gentiles, by receiving the Gospel, do, they will be accounted children of Abraham, and heirs of the promises; “in every nation he that
“feareth

DISC. "feareth God, and worketh righteousness,"
VI. which without faith it is impossible to do
 — "is accepted with him,"

13. After this introduction, St. Peter proceeds to confirm to his little audience the truth of that word, which they had heard concerning Jesus of Nazareth. He declares to them his unction with the Holy Ghost and with power; the works wrought by him for the deliverance of poor mankind from the yoke of the great oppressor; his death, resurrection, and appointment to be the judge of quick and dead; with the consentient testimony of all the prophets to the doctrine of remission of sins through faith in his name. While he preached these interesting and glorious truths, the Holy Ghost fell upon those who heard the word, and they were immediately baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

14. In this manner were the first fruits of the Gentiles consecrated to God; and thus was the gate opened, through which
 hath

hath since passed that “ great multitude, DISC.
VI.
“ not to be numbered by man, of all na-
“ tions, and kindreds, and people, and
“ tongues, who stand continually before
“ the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed
“ with white robes, and palms in their
“ hands, crying with a loud voice, Salva-
“ tion to our God, which sitteth upon the
“ throne, and to the Lamb!” The same
gate is still open, and blessed is he who
desireth and striveth to enter in thereat. In
order to which, when he hath considered
the example of Cornelius, we have only to
add—“ Go, and do thou likewise.”

both sides passed that the great multitude, it was
not to be numbered by man; of all na-
tions, and kindreds, and people, and
tongues, who stand continually before
the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed
with white robes, and palms in their
hands, singing with a loud voice, Salu-
tion to our God, which sitteth upon the
throne, and to the Lamb! The same
gate is still open, and blessed is he who
heareth and observeth what is therein. In
order to which, when the hath considered
the example of Cornelius, we have only to
add, O, and do thou likewise. And yet
it is enough said, if we remember that
in this regard we are called to follow
Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life,
and who alone can give us life eternal.

Amen.

DISCOURSE VII.

THE PROVIDENTIAL DELIVERANCE FROM THE GUNPOWDER TREASON.

PSALM LXIV. PART OF VERSE 9.

They shall wisely consider of his doing.

THE Psalm, from whence these DISC.
VII.
words are taken, is one of the *proper* Psalms appointed to be used upon this day; and well suited indeed it is to the occasion. A king in danger of being cut off by the secret contrivances of his malignant adversaries, prays to God, that his life may be “preserved from fear of the enemy;” speaks of the “*secret* counsel of the wicked;” of their “shooting in *secret*, laying snares *privily*, and saying, “Who shall see them?” But he foretels

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that

DISC. that the Almighty, who surveys the darkest
 VII. proceedings of the wicked, shall, in a moment when they least expect it, blast all their designs; "God shall shoot at them
 "with an arrow, suddenly shall they be
 "wounded!" He intimates the manner—that their schemes should be discovered and *betrayed* by themselves; "So shall
 "they make their own tongue to fall upon
 "themselves:" and then follows the effect that should be produced in the hearts of others by so awful an event, in the words of the text: "and all men shall fear, and
 "shall declare the work of God; for they
 "shall wisely consider of his doing;" that is, men shall ascribe such deliverance to the Providence of God watching over them; and it will be their wisdom so to consider it, as HIS doing, and not the work of man, or of human prudence; much less that of what we commonly style *fortune*, or *chance*.

It shall be the business of the following discourse, to point out

I. The

I. The necessity there is of attention and *consideration*, to discover the hand of God, and the manner of it's working, in those events of which we are informed either by history, or our own experience.—“ They shall *consider* of his doing.”

DISC.
VII.

II. The *wisdom* of thus considering—
“ They shall *wisely* consider of his doings.”

III. Certain marks whereby we may at any time discern an especial Providence; applying them, as we pass, to the transactions of this day.

I. Consideration, and indeed no small degree of it, is necessary to discern the hand of God, and the manner of it's working, in the affairs of men. Many there are who, for want of this consideration, have no apprehension at all of it, nor are affected with it. They are either too busy, or too idle, to attend to the history of Providence, and the marvellous things which God has wrought, and is now working in the world.

DISC. Of some the Prophet says, "The harp and
VII. "the viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine
"are in their feasts; but they regard not
"the work of the Lord, nor the operations
"of his hands:" that is, their minds are
so sunk and lost in pleasures and diversions,
as never to observe the remarkable occur-
rences of Providence.

Others see what passes, and, like the
brute creatures, gaze awhile at it, and turn
away, making no careful reflection, or en-
quiry into causes and effects. "A brutish
"man," saith David, "knoweth not, nei-
"ther doth a fool understand this." On one
occasion, he acknowledgeth himself to have
been in this state; "so foolish was I, and
"ignorant; I was as a beast before thee."

Others there are, who pretend to con-
sider, and enquire freely, but all the wrong
way. Instead of discerning and adoring
the hand of God, they labour to deny, and
shut it quite out, ascribing all that happens
to human politics, or the working of men
only.

only. "How doth God know? and is
"there knowlege in the most High? The
"Lord doth not see, neither doth the God
"of Jacob regard." Such have been in
all ages; and such (the more is the pity!)
abound among the historians and *philoso-*
phers (as they call themselves) of our own;
who spare no time nor pains in attempting
to exclude God from any inspection or in-
fluence upon our affairs. Accordingly,

DISC.
VII.

Some have been either so perverse, or so
profane, that they would not "read provi-
"dence (as a learned writer well expresses
"it) in the fairest print." "Lord, when
"thy hand is lifted up," and that ever so
high, in the most stupendous miracles,
"they will not see:" such as those, of
whom it is said, in the Psalm, "Our fa-
"thers understood not thy wonders in
"Egypt:" such as those, who, when they
had seen the earth swallowing up Corah
and his company, and the fire from the
Lord consuming the men that offered in-
cense; yet presently after charged Moses

DISC. and Aaron with having "slain the people
VII. "of the Lord:" or such as those in the Gospel, who, though Christ had "done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not."

Wonder not, therefore, after this, if many do not discern the hand of God, when it is not lifted up so high, or extended so far, in miraculous acts; when, as in what we call the ordinary course of things, so many different plans are carrying on, so many instruments are employed; so many and so various ends are to be answered; so intricate must be the complication and entanglement of events, in a series of them reaching from the beginning to the end of the world; and so many of those events cannot be cleared up, and made to appear in their proper and full light, till that end shall come. On all these accounts, the special providence of God is seldom so evident, as that, without great attention and consideration, we can perceive and trace it. It may have been also judged expedient that

that many occurrences should be puzzling to us, to quash our presumption, to exercise our faith, to quicken our industry, and to find us employment. Our understanding was not given us, to be idle, upon such occasions, and it is our true wisdom so to use it; which was the

DISC.
VII.

II^d point to be proved; “they *wisely* “consider HIS doings.”

He is not a man of sense, who denies either the being, or the providence of God; there is no wisdom in atheism; it is “the fool,” who “says in his heart, there is “no God.” And surely, to imagine that he who made the world should take no care of the world which he hath made, but, as it were, forgetting that he had made it, should deliver it up to chance and fate, is an opinion equally foolish with the other. There are some who well know, that if there be a God, and if he observes and takes cognizance of human affairs, he must one day punish them for their vil-

DISC. lanies and their blasphemies. Therefore
VII.
they endeavour to persuade themselves there is neither a providence nor a God. Through the corruptions of their hearts, and being given over to a reprobate mind, they are so unfortunate as to succeed in their endeavours; and by such as they can seduce to a like degree of desperate wickedness, they may be accounted wise men. But he who dwelleth in heaven beholds their devices, and laughs them to scorn. He knows a day is coming, when his vengeance will cause them to feel the truths, which no evidence would induce them to believe. The greatest and best persons in all ages have believed in "a God who governed "the world;" and wherein can the wisdom of man consist, but in observing and studying the works and dispensations of that God, from the beginning to this day? For grandeur, pleasure, and advantage, what subject can compare with this? and how senseless is the man, who passes his life without attending to them! By his mercies and by his judgments doth our God continually

continually speak to us, and signify his mind, and shew forth the glories of his kingdom, for which we are evermore bound to praise him. But how can we praise him as we ought; or, indeed, at all, if we know not what those mercies, and those judgments, and those glories are?—"The works of the Lord are great, sought out"—studied and traced—"by all them that have pleasure therein." "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord. Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me; that I am the Lord, who exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth.—A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand—But whoso is wise, shall understand these things; prudent, and he shall know them:" such will know, that "he whose name is Jehovah, is the most High over all the world; they will say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous, doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth."

DISC.
VII.

Diligently

DISC. Diligently to mark, and carefully to treasure up in our minds, the special providences of the Almighty, is the way to preserve and nourish our faith and hope in him ; it furnishes the grounds of our thankfulness and praise ; it stirs up our finest feelings and very best affections towards him ; holy joy, humble reverence, and hearty love ; it supports us under all our sufferings ; and affords us comfort in all our sorrows. When adversity presses hard upon a man ; when he is stripped of his possessions, and threatened with torture ; when enemies persecute, and friends betray or forsake ; or when pain and sickness harass him upon his bed, and sleep departs from his eyelids—Gracious Lord, what shall become of him, if, at such an hour, a writer shall inform him there is no help for him in his God ; that there is neither Redeemer, nor Creator ; that the universe is the sport of contending dæmons, a scene of ravage and desolation ; and, instead of being “ full of the loving kindness of the Lord,” is peopled only with fiends and furies ? What sort of a
being

being must the writer be, who could give DISC.
such a representation of things; and what VII.
does he deserve at the hands of mankind?
—Before guilt of this infernal dye, that of
cheating and thieving, of perjury, robbery,
and murder, melts away, and vanishes into
nothing.

On the other hand, and by way of con-
trast, look into that collection of divine
hymns, which have been recited in the
Church, to the unspeakable instruction and
consolation of the faithful, from age to age.
I mean, as you well know, the book of
Psalms. See there, how the people of God,
whenever any calamity befel them, either
as a nation, or as individuals, sustained,
comforted, and cheered themselves and each
other, by recollecting and meditating upon
the works of the Lord which he had
wrought in old time for their fathers,
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the chil-
dren of Israel, his servants; the miracles in
Egypt, the wonders in the field of Zoan;
the division of the waters at the Red Sea,
and

DISC. and again at the river Jordan; the fall of

VII.

Jericho, the discomfiture of Sisera and Jabin at the river Kishon, and the overthrow of all the idolatrous kingdoms of Canaan. While they were employed in chanting forth the praises of their God, for the special providences formerly vouchsafed them, their minds were comforted, their spirits were raised, their hearts were warmed, their faith was revived and invigorated; it grew strong, and mighty; and they no longer supposed it possible, whatever their present sufferings might be, that he who had so often made bare his holy arm in their cause, could "ever leave them, or forsake them."

The use which they made of the mercies vouchsafed to them in old time should we make of the special providences vouchsafed to us, in the deliverance and preservation of our own church and nation from the various schemes concerted for the destruction of both. Among the first of these may be justly reckoned the deliverance this day

day commemorated, as will sufficiently appear, if we consider

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III. The marks and tokens visibly impressed upon it; how *strange*, and how *important* it was.

The Scriptures relate many events of a *strange* kind; that is, strange, compared with the ordinary course of things, or the natural influence of causes, when the means are disproportionate, unsuitable, nay, seem even contrary to the effect. Such events speak God to be their cause, by his invisible power supplying apparent defects in the means. In the Scripture-histories we are, as it were, admitted behind the scenes, and informed that the hand of God was more immediately concerned. Thus the stars in their courses fought against Sisera; the Lord thundered upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; he made the host of Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and horses, and a great host: he made the children of Ammon and Moab to destroy
one

DISC. one another: he smote in the camp of
VII. the Assyrians 185000 men: under his direction one chases a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight: a stripling, with nothing more than a sling and a pebble, destroys a mighty giant, armed from head to foot: the cunning schemes of worldly and treacherous politicians, such as Abimelech, Achitophel, and many others, are suddenly baffled and blasted, and the mischief intended falls upon the heads of those who intended it; plots, with all possible caution and secrecy contrived in darkness, are by improbable means, and unaccountable accidents, disclosed and brought to light; "a bird of the air" (as the wise man speaks) "telling the matter;" or, "the stones in the wall" (as it is in the prophet) "crying out," treason! In the book of Esther we read, that the king cannot sleep: to divert him, the chronicle is called for; Mordecai's service is pitched upon, and enquiry made concerning his recompence; honour is decreed him; so the cruel device of Haman, to destroy the Jews, comes out;

out; and he himself is hanged on the gallows, which he had erected for Mor-decai.

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Thus in the desperate wickedness of this day, the plot was laid deep and dark; the implements of destruction prepared, and all ready, when the heart of one of the conspirators relents towards a friend, who must have been involved in the common ruin: a letter is sent to warn him; in that letter the nature of the destruction is alluded to; the letter is carried to the king, who conjectures the meaning; a search is made, and the villain seized upon the spot; who declared, that if he had been advanced a few steps farther, he would have set fire to the train, and sacrificed himself, rather than the design should have failed.

Occurrences, like these, containing in them somewhat, though not strictly miraculous, yet truly admirable; turning out of the ordinary stream of human affairs, as miracles surmount the course of nature,
most

DISC. most reasonably may, most justly should be
 VII. ascribed to the special operation of him,
 “ who only doth wondrous things ; who
 “ breaketh the arm of the wicked, and
 “ weakeneth the strength of the mighty ;
 “ who disappointeth the devices of the
 “ crafty, so that their hands cannot per-
 “ form their enterprize ; who is known by
 “ the judgment that he executeth, when
 “ the wicked is snared by the work of his
 “ own hand.”

This may be farther evinced from the
importance of the deliverance.

To intitle every little trifling thing that happens to a special providence, would be levity ; to father upon the Almighty the mischiefs issuing from our own sin and folly, would be something worse : but to ascribe every grand and beneficial event to his good hand, has ever been reputed wisdom and justice. It was a prevailing opinion even amongst the heathen, that whatever did bring great benefit to mankind,
 was

was not effected without divine goodness DISC.
VII.
toward men*. We know indeed that God doth not disregard any thing, but watches over *all* by his general and ordinary Providence. He thereby “ clothes the grafs of the
“ field ; he provideth for the raven his food,
“ and the young lions seek their meat from
“ him ;” without his care “ a sparrow does
“ not fall to the ground ;” and by it “ the
“ hairs of our heads are all numbered.” But the hand of his more special providence is chiefly employed in managing affairs of moment and consequence to us ; such as great counfels and undertakings ; revolutions and changes of state ; war and peace ; victory and good success ; the protection of princes, and preservation of his people. When therefore any remarkable event, highly conducing to the public good of church and state, doth manifest itself, the accomplishment of it should be attributed to God’s own hand. When any pernicious enterprize, levelled against the safety

* Balbus, in Cic. *de Naturâ Deorum*, lib. ii.

DISC. of prince and people, is disappointed and
VII. brought to nought, surely it is fit we
 should profess and say, "The righteous
 " Lord hath hewn the snares of the un-
 " godly in pieces."

And if the preservation of the king and royal family, with the three estates in parliament assembled^b; if the freeing our country from civil disorder and confusion of the worst kind; from the yoke of usurpation and slavery; from the most grievous extortion and rapine; from bloody persecutions and trials; if the upholding from utter ruin our church, which was so happily settled, and had so long flourished; if the securing our profession of God's holy truth and faith, with a pure worship, an edifying administration of his word and sacraments, with a comely, wholesome and moderate

^b Such is the language of the Rubrick in the form of service for this day: whence it must occur to the Reader, that the doctrine which makes the *King* one of the three estates of Parliament, is an *innovation*, introduced by Republican Writers; who diminish the *Crown* to raise the *people*, and in the end to overturn the Government.

discipline;

discipline; if being rescued from impious DISC.
errors, scandalous practices, and supersti- VII.
tious rites, with merciless violence forced
upon us; if a continuance of the most de-
sirable comforts and conveniences of our
lives; if all these are benefits, then was
the deliverance of this day one of the most
beneficial and most important, that ever
was granted by Heaven to any nation. And
notwithstanding the obscurity, or intricacy,
that may sometimes appear in the course of
Providence; notwithstanding any general
exceptions, that may, by perverse incredu-
lity, be alledged against the conduct of
things here below; there are marks very
observable, and this event is full of them,
whereby, if we consider wisely, with due
attention, diligence, and impartiality, we
may discern and understand that it was
“ the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in
“ our eyes.”

For these and all other benefits which
have been in old time conferred, and often
since preserved, and handed down to us of

DISC. the present generation, let us rejoice, and
VII. be glad, and give honour to him who hath
so conferred, and so preserved them. And
let our affections and our lives harmonize
with our voices, when we say—

“Blessed be the Lord, who hath not
“given us over for a prey unto their teeth.
“Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the
“snare of the fowler; the snare is broken,
“and we are delivered.

“Allelujah! Salvation, and glory, and
“power unto the Lord our God; for true
“and righteous are his judgments.

“Great and marvellous are thy works,
“O Lord God Almighty; just and true
“are thy ways, thou King of saints.

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
“who only doest wondrous things; and
“blessed be his glorious name for ever;
“and let the whole earth be filled with his
“glory. Amen and Amen.”

DISCOURSE VIII.

GOD THE PRESERVER OF PRINCES.

PSALM CXLIV. 10.

It is He that giveth salvation unto Kings.

IT was a fine elogium passed at once on DISC.
the head and heart of the greatest of VIII.
commanders by the most celebrated of orators, that *injuries* were the only things he was capable of *forgetting*. The generality of mankind are liable, alas! to be reproached with a conduct of a very different nature. They remember most things better than benefits; those, especially, which have been conferred upon them by their heavenly Father and Friend. “Praise the Lord, O

DISC. "my soul," says David elsewhere, "and
 VIII. "forget not all his benefits." A propensity
 to forget is evidently implied by this warm
 and spirited exhortation not to do so.
 Thoroughly sensible of such a propensity
 in human nature, the best writers on the
 practical and devotional part of Religion
 have prescribed the use of a diary, in which
 the many mercies and deliverances we from
 time to time experience may be regularly
 entered; that so, by recurring frequently
 to such a register, the traces of them, in
 danger otherwise of being obliterated by
 the cares and pleasures of life, may be re-
 freshed and renewed in our minds.

If the case be so bad with individuals
 in this respect, there is no reason to sup-
 pose it better with communities; where,
 the benefit being shared by so many, each
 is apt to consider his own portion of it as
 small, and scarcely worth notice; where
 that, which should be done by every body,
 is often done by nobody; and where the
 guilt of ingratitude, like the value of the
 benefit,

benefit, by being divided, seems, in the conscience of every single member, to be diminished, and, as it were, brought to nothing. The astonishing instances of *forgetfulness* among the ancient people of God, recorded and reproved, for our admonition, in the Scriptures of truth, will occur to your minds; and parallel instances, among Christians, notwithstanding such admonition, will present themselves to him, who is disposed to behold them.

DISC.
VIII.

The preceding observations are intended to justify the wisdom of our ancestors, in appointing these annual commemorations of blessings, thus for ever registered in our national diary, that they may not be neglected and forgotten. Nor let us by any means grow weary of celebrating them; but, even to the years of many generations, still continue, with thankful hearts, to exclaim—"We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what thou hast done in their days, and in the old time before them!" For though the

DISC. mercy be old, the remembrance of it should
VIII. be for ever young—renewed in our minds,
 from year to year, and from age to age; while the fathers to the children make known the loving kindness of the Lord, and speak good of his name, by contemplating afresh the doctrine of the day, and the fact in which it is exemplified. The former of these is contained in the words of the text, which, when opened and illustrated, will prepare the way for a display of the latter — “I will sing a new song unto thee, O God; upon a psaltery and an instrument of ten strings will I sing praises unto thee, who givest salvation unto kings.”

It is the high prerogative of the Almighty to give salvation, to preserve and deliver. “I even I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour.” The divine mercy, like the spacious vault of heaven, extends to all, and comprehends within its fostering bosom the whole creation of God. “Thou, Lord, wilt save both man and beast.”

But

But its chief object is man, the lord of DISC.
VIII.
this lower world; so that still, compara-
tively, we may ask with the apostle—

“Doth God take care for oxen; or saith
“he it not rather for our sakes?” And,
for this reason, Job cries out, emphatically,
“I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee,
“O thou preserver of MEN?”

He, who is the preserver of men, above
other creatures, is also the preserver of
kings, above other men. This point was
acknowledged among the heathen, whose
leaders are always represented, by the most
ancient of their poets, as acting under the
immediate guidance and protection of their
respective tutelary deities. But we have a
more sure word—“Great deliverance giveth
“he to his king; he is the saving health of
“his anointed; he is wonderful among the
“kings of the earth; he giveth salvation
“unto kings.”

Let us enquire into the *reasons* why God
is pleased thus to manifest an especial favour
to

DISC. to those who bear rule in the kingdoms of
VIII. men.

As medicine supposes disease, deliverance must imply danger. From troubles and perils no station is exempt. "Great travel
 " is created for every man, and an heavy
 " yoke is upon the sons of Adam; from
 " him that sitteth on a throne of glory,
 " unto him that is humbled in earth and
 " ashes." But this is not all. Great men not only share with others the calamities of life, but their share is in proportion to their greatness. Of what materials are the annals of history composed, but the continual perils and misfortunes of princes? When the storm arises, the loftiest cedars first and chiefly feel it's force; and therefore they need an extraordinary degree of strength and support. God is mighty to save kings, because there is one mighty to destroy them, and whose interest it is to do so. By government vigorously administered order is maintained in the world; then piety and virtue take root downwards, and bear fruit upwards;

upwards; then the kingdom of heaven is established, and extends itself upon earth. DISC.
VIII.

But when there is "no king in Israel," and each man may do, unpunished, "that which seems right in his own eyes," an entrance is ministered for every thing ungodly and immoral; for every species of violence, and of folly; and the empire of Satan prevails. What wonder, then, that *he* should be the spirit, which worketh in the children of disobedience, exciting tumults and rebellions, delighting in the noise of these waves, and the madness of the people; and giving it in charge, like the Syrian of old, to his captains, "Fight neither with small nor great, save only against the king?" And what wonder, again, if this be the case, that God should interpose, to save and deliver those, who are thus powerfully and unequally assailed? Verily, he would do it, for this reason alone, since it is his glory to resist the proud, and to put down the mighty from their seats.

But there is another reason. Kings, while

DISC. while employed in the due and faithful execution of their office, have a peculiar claim to his favour and protection, because they are, as the apostle speaks, his ministers, his servants, his delegates and representatives upon earth, attending continually, as such, upon this very thing. And even among men, every superior thinks himself obliged to defend, and vindicate from contempt and insult, those who are acting under him, and by virtue of his commission. Shall not therefore the Judge of all the world do right? The honour of the ambassador is the honour of the prince who sends him; and we know who it is that saith, "By ME kings reign." On this account, he hath so often made bare his holy arm in the sight of the people, and hath "given salvation unto kings."

Nor is it for *their* sakes only, that salvation is thus given to them. The felicity of a whole nation is involved in that of it's Governor. The salvation given to the head diffuses itself to the members of the body politic,

politic, to the very least and lowest of DISC.
them. All feel the benefit of government, VIII.
instituted for the good of all; and no
government was ever so badly administered,
as not to be a blessing, if compared with
anarchy, which multiplies one tyrant into
ten thousand. Society, which implies
government, is the natural state of man-
kind; all are born under it; and it is happy
for them that they are so; they could not
otherwise be reared from infancy to man-
hood, or partake in security of any of those
blessings, now poured in such profusion
around us. Willingly or unwillingly the
people must be governed; and, whatever
they may fancy to the contrary, by some
or other they always were governed, and
always will be governed. Their *well* being,
nay, their very *being*, as a people, depends
upon it. "Let supplication be made for
"kings, and for all that are in authority"
—Why?—"That we may lead a quiet
"and peaceable life, in all godliness and
"honesty;" that we may be safe from
harm, and have leisure to be good, and to
do

DISC. do good. The Jews, even when captives
VIII. in Babylon, were commanded to pray for
 the prosperity of their oppressor and his city,
 for the same reason, that "in it's peace
 "they might have peace." But the con-
 nection between government and felicity is
 no where marked out in a more expressive
 and beautiful manner than in the verses
 of our psalm immediately following the
 text. "Rid me, and deliver me," says the
 Israelitish monarch, "from the hand of
 "strange children, whose mouth speaketh
 "vanity, and their right hand is a right
 "hand of falsehood."—Wherefore does the
 king thus intreat to be delivered? Plainly,
 on account of the benefits that would be
 thence derived to the community, over
 which, by God's appointment, he presided—
 "That our sons may be as plants grown
 "up in their youth; that our daughters
 "may be as corner-stones, polished after
 "the similitude of a palace: that our gar-
 "ners may be full, affording all manner of
 "store; that our sheep may bring forth
 "thousands and ten thousands in our
 "streets:

“ streets : that our oxen may be strong to DISC.
“ labour ; that there be no breaking in, or VIII.
“ going out; that there be no complaining
“ in our streets. Happy is that people,
“ which,” by the salvation given to their
king, “ is in such a case; yea, happy is that
“ people, whose God is the Lord,” that
can give salvation to him.

Such, then, are the reasons of that especial favour, which divine Providence, in so many instances, hath shewn towards the persons of princes ; because of the danger they are continually in from the adversary ; because of the relation they bear to him, with whose authority they are invested ; and because in *their* safety and happiness consist those of the people under them.

And thus much for the doctrine contained in the text. The application to the deliverance this day commemorated will best be made by considering, how great the salvation — how evidently the gift of God.

The

DISC. ○ The salvation must be estimated by the
VIII. destruction intended to have been wrought;
 and that was great indeed ! great, beyond
 any parallel in the annals of mankind !
 Armies have met, and slaughtered each
 other in battle ; kings have fallen in the
 field, they have been assassinated, they have
 been poisoned—one has been tried as a
 rebel against the *majesty of the people*, and
 executed, for *high treason*, before his own
 palace, by his own subjects ! But a design
 to destroy the whole legislature, king, lords,
 and commons, at a single blast, and leave not
 a wreck behind—this certainly was a master
 stroke of villany, black as the materials
 with which it was to have been accom-
 plished, dark as the place where those ma-
 terials were deposited. Blessed be God, it
 miscarried !—But who can paint in their
 proper colours the consequences that must
 have attended it's success ? An instantane-
 ous and total dissolution of all govern-
 ment, introductory to such a scene as never
 was beheld, of broils, and disorders ; of usur-
 pation and slavery ; of extortion and ra-
 pine ;

pine; of faction and fury; of superstition DISC.
VIII.
and ignorance; of persecutions, tortures, and
massacres;—the whole kingdom a perfect
Aceldama, a field of blood, for generations
to come, without measure, and without
end. From all these and other calamities
(if others there are) worse than fancy can
form, or fear itself conceive, was this our
country saved by the discovery of the infer-
nal machinations against it.

There is no occasion to particularize the
circumstances of this discovery. They have
been often recounted, and are well known.
And when we reflect upon the unheard of
iniquity of the plot, together with the
confusion and misery intended to have been
brought on a mighty nation, and happily
prevented by such discovery, he must be
very blind indeed, who does not perceive
the finger of God in it; and thoroughly
stupid and insensible, who does not, on
that account, praise and magnify his holy
name.

DISC.

VIII.

But there is a circumstance behind, which deserves consideration at all times, and more especially in the present. I mean, the *principle*, the *motive*, which gave birth to this diabolical design. For if you ask, why the governors of three kingdoms were to be thus cut off at one stroke, and dispersed to the four winds? the answer is, They were *heretics*—the church of Rome, in the plenitude of her power and pride, had so denominated them, and judged them not fit to live any longer upon the earth.

That so detestable a scheme should have entered into the heart of man, upon any pretence, is disgrace enough to human nature—But that it should be formed upon the pretence of *religion*—of the *Christian* religion—this is making *sin* to become indeed *exceeding sinful*! From the intended effects of the conspiracy our country was saved by the discovery of it, previously to it's execution. But where is the balm, to heal the *wounds*, which religion has thereby

thereby received, in the house of men pre- DISC.
tending to be it's best, nay it's only true VIII.
friends? The efforts of all it's adversaries

put together never effected one hundredth part of the mischief caused by the contests and dissensions, the wars and tumults, plots and assassinations, excited and carried on by such friends, under the notion of promoting it's welfare and advancement in the world. He who reads the accounts of such proceedings feels his indignation rising not only against the men, but against the faith professed by the perpetrators of these enormities; and he is tempted to exclaim, as some have exclaimed—"If this be Christianity, let my soul rest with the *philosophers.*" Fully sensible of this, the writers on the side of infidelity spare no pains in ransacking history for facts of this kind, which are continually presented to the reader with every circumstance of aggravation, either in the form of virulent invective, or the more dangerous one of sly and pointed irony, a method practised but too successfully by a late celebrated wit on the

DISC. continent, and in the prosecution of which,
VIII. *the historian of the Roman empire*, among
 ourselves, has condescended, alas, (the more
 is the pity!) to play a second part to him.

To those who may be in danger of seduction by this very fallacious, though, at first sight, specious argument, we have a few things to offer; and this is the proper opportunity for offering them.

In the first place, then, we must earnestly exhort them, as they love the truth, and their own eternal salvation, to make the just and necessary distinction between the religion, and the persons professing that religion. Does the Gospel teach any lessons of the kind we have been considering? Does it direct subjects to blow up their governors into the air, because of some supposed errors in their religious opinions? Certainly not. If those disciples were re-proved, as strangers to it's spirit, who desired to revenge an indignity shewn to the person of their Saviour, by fetching down
 fire

fire from above, as little can disciples now be justified by it, in seeking, on any pretence, to stir up fire from beneath. Was Christianity at first propagated, or did it direct itself ever after to be propagated, by *doing violence to any man*? You know the contrary; you know, that all it's precepts point quite another way. There is no need to weary you with citations; a moment's reflection is sufficient to convince and satisfy any person on this head. Let not Christianity therefore suffer in your opinion, through the vices and villanies of those who disgrace it; but endeavour, yourselves, to adorn it in all things; and be *astonished*, if you please, as an honest heathen historian professes himself to have been, that *wickedness* and *cruelty* should mark the actions of men, whose religion throughout inculcates only *righteousness* and *mercy*.

DISC.
VIII.

To lessen, however, in some measure, this astonishment, suffer us to remind you, in the second place, that nothing, after all, is more common, than for a good thing

DISC. to be abused by bad men; and then the
VIII. better the thing abused, the worse and the
more abominable is the abuse of it. When
Christianity, by the favour of the converted
emperors, opened the way to wealth and
power, it is natural to suppose, that some-
times men would embrace it, not for any
affection borne to itself, but as the means
of acquiring wealth and power; which,
when so acquired, would be often misem-
ployed, and religion become the object of
those evil passions, which it should—and,
if properly received, would—have mortified
and subdued. This is human nature—these are the *offences*, which, in the
present state of a fallen world, *must needs*
come—there is no preventing them. But
let us not argue from abuse against use.
Let us scour off the rust, but preserve the
metal. Religion came pure from the hands
of God, but was adulterated in passing
through those of men. To God therefore
be the glory, to man the shame.

Lastly, and above all—When you find
yourselves

yourselfes disposed to listen to the voice of ^{DISC.}
the seducer, and to think unfavourably of ^{VIII.}
Christianity, on account of the ill lives and
base actions of those who profess it, or in-
deed on any other account; always be upon
your guard, and suspect yourselfes: examine
diligently whether, through the corruption
of your own hearts and lives, you do not
seek occasion against religion, and wish to
escape from the holiness of it's precepts,
the rigour of it's discipline, and the terror
of it's judgments, by denying it's authen-
ticity. We often see men so ready to reject
the strongest reasons for it, and take up
with the weakest against it, that it seems
difficult to account for their conduct, on
any other principle.

This may suffice for the argument form-
ed by unbelievers, to the disadvantage of
the Gospel, upon the transaction of the
day, and others of a similar nature.

Respecting those of the Romish persua-
sion, something must be said. But it shall

DISC. be said, not in the spirit of animosity and
VIII. invective, but in that of Christian charity.
We envy them not the indulgence they have lately experienced, and which they would probably have experienced sooner, had government deemed it consistent with the welfare and safety of the state. It is to be hoped, they have at length perceived their error, in endeavouring to propagate religion by sanguinary methods; and to win proselytes by fire and sword, by racks and gibbets. Were the union ever so desirable, the proposed method of effecting it would spoil all; it can make no man affect the church that adopts it; it tends, on the contrary, to inspire into him an aversion from all that is called *Christianity*; and has given great occasion, as we have seen, to the enemies of the Lord, to blaspheme. There is no natural connection between the Gospel of Peace, and the sword, or the bayonet. A saying indeed of a zealot in former times has been reported, that "unarmed missionaries make few converts." Yet were the apostles of our ever blessed Redeemer

deemer such missionaries, and they converted the world, at a time when the wit and the wisdom, the fashion and the power of it, were all in arms against them. To be converted to any opinion, or system, a man must be first well persuaded of the truth of such opinion, or system. But *gunpowder* is no instrument of persuasion. The tongue and the pen were intended for that purpose: and even by these the purpose is always most successfully effected, when they are employed with gentleness. Man, as has been well observed, like every other animal, is best tamed and managed by good usage; he does not love to be bullied and beaten into truth itself. If you are in possession of it, state it with every possible advantage. Let her appear in her native charms, that the world may admire and adore; let humility and meekness, faith and patience attend upon her, and in her mouth be evermore the law of kindness. When your writings shall be thus new modelled, let your lives and actions be in perfect unison with them; let your behaviour engage the beholder

DISC. beholder to a consideration of your doctrine,
VIII. and your doctrine reflect lustre on your behaviour. Then may we hope you will reform what in very deed ought long since to have been reformed in your communion, and render it such as we can conscientiously accede to; such as becomes the simplicity and purity of the Gospel of Christ our Saviour. Or if this cannot be, we may at least live upon a foot of peace and security together (Judah no more troubling Ephraim, and Ephraim no more vexing Judah), without apprehension of plots, anathemas, and crusades. Indeed, *their* day seems to be pretty well over, since we have lived to see the sovereign Pontiff, instead of launching the thunderbolts of the Vatican at the devoted head of a reforming Emperor, taking a long and painful journey to supplicate, and returning as he came—A spectacle entirely new! When a disposition appears in the rulers of any kingdom to abolish absurd and superstitious usages, the Court of Rome has now nothing left for it, but with all possible expedition to issue an

an edict, most graciously *empowering* them
so to do. Thus are the mighty fallen!—

DISC.
VIII.

And still lower must they fall: for the day
seems evidently approaching, when “the
“kings of the earth,” as they are styled,
or the princes of the Romish communion,
shall, by some mighty effort, emancipate
themselves from the bondage in which they
are holden, and destroy the power which
they have so long contributed to support;
unless that power will ingenuously purify
itself from its corruptions, and begin a
new æra of primitive Christianity.

The church of Rome should have done
this honestly and effectually, when its cor-
ruptions were first pointed out. It had
then retained those branches, which, in de-
fault of such conduct, were broken off.
Nor can there be—indeed, there ought
not to be—any other method devised, or
thought of, to graft them in again.

When a church really stands in need of
reformation, it should always, in *prudence*,

as

DISC. as well as duty, reform *itself*, to prevent
VIII. the task from being undertaken by others, who, though they may entertain a very laudable *abhorrence of idols*, may not perhaps scruple, if a tempting opportunity should offer, to *commit sacrilege*: who, under cover of reforming abuses, may at length reform away Christianity itself; and, either through ignorance or malice, may “root up the wheat with the tares.”

As to ourselves — We celebrate on this day a twofold deliverance from the tyranny of Rome, vouchsafed at different and distant periods. Let us not give occasion to our adversaries in that quarter to say, as they sometimes have had the effrontery to say, that protestantism naturally leads the way to Socinianism, and materialism, and, in short, to every thing that is opprobrious. Let us not be forward to believe, what some are so very forward to tell us, that the doctrines of the ever blessed Trinity in Unity, of the Divinity of our Lord and Saviour, and of that “full, perfect, and sufficient

“ ficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, DISC.
“ by him made for the sins of men,” pro- VIII.
ceeded from the *papal chair*, and constitute
a part of *the grand Apostacy*. In one word,
let our studies, and our writings, our lives,
and our conversation, join in making a plain
and unequivocal declaration to the whole
world, that, though we cease to be *papists*,
we continue to be CHRISTIANS.

DISCOURSE IX.

THE PURIFICATION OF THE MIND BY TROUBLES AND TRIALS.

J O B XXIII. 10.

When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

THE afflictions of life, though often
grievous enough in themselves, be-
come much more so by that state of doubt
and perplexity into which the mind of the
sufferer is brought by them. He is at a loss
to conceive, why so much wretchedness is
his portion, and what the design of Provi-
dence can be in sending it. He is tempted
to despair, as thinking God has forsaken
him; or to impiety, as imagining there can
be

DISC.
IX.

DISC. be no God who governs the world in wisdom and righteousness.

Whenever we find ourselves led to such conclusions as these, we may be sure there is some error in the principles upon which we set out. We are in the dark with regard to some point, the knowledge of which would bring all right, and restore peace and comfort to our fluttering and disordered spirits.

In the case before us, a wrong notion of human life is at the bottom of those desponding and murmuring thoughts, which arise in our hearts, on finding ourselves encompassed and oppressed by a larger share than ordinary of its cares and troubles. We look not forward as we ought to do; we confine our views to the state of things in this present world; we regard it as final, and then wonder why our condition should be worse than that of our neighbours, when we think ourselves much better than they; and perhaps we really are so.

When

When the matter is thus stated, difficulties will certainly thicken upon us apace; and indeed I know not how we shall ever be able to see our way through them. But let us only reflect for a moment, that this life is no more than a preparation for another; that we come into it in a fallen and corrupted nature; that we are to be purified, during our short continuance in it, to qualify us for perfect happiness, and endless glory, in the presence of God; that such purification must be effected by trials and temptations; and that trials and temptations necessarily suppose troubles and afflictions, without which they cannot be made—let but these few plain considerations take place in the mind, and, at the brightness before them, clouds and darkness shall disperse, doubts and difficulties shall vanish away; and the poor desponding sufferer, who was lately accustomed, like the possessed man in the Gospel, to wander wild among the tombs, his imagination haunted with thoughts of death and desolation,

DISC.

IX.

DISC. lation, may now be seen in his right mind,
 IX. sitting at the feet of Jesus, and listening to words like these: "My son, despise not
 "thou the chastening of the Lord, nor
 "faint when thou art rebuked of him; for
 "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,
 "and scourgeth every son whom he re-
 "ceiveth. Blessed is the man that endur-
 "eth temptation; for when he is tried, he
 "shall receive the crown of life, which the
 "Lord hath promised to them that love
 "him."

I need not take up your time in proving at large, that this life is a state of trial. It appears sufficiently from the nature of man; from the declarations of God; from the history of his people in every age; and, above all, from the life and death of our Saviour Christ. We are all fully persuaded of this most important truth; but it may be of use to shew, how this persuasion, if reduced to practice, may become a source of patience and consolation, enabling us to support,

support, with dignity and ease, the several DISC.
inconveniences and tribulations, which are IX.
permitted to befall us here below.

In general, we sink under temptation, because we do not sufficiently accustom ourselves to expect, and are therefore unprepared to encounter it. But were this idea (which is undoubtedly the true idea of our state) firmly impressed upon our minds, and always ready at hand, we should then stand armed for the fight, and by divine assistance be enabled to overcome. In this war, as in others, the great point is, to guard against a surprise; and to take care, that whenever the enemy shall attack, he may find us ready to repel.

Of the temptations, or trials, to which we are subject, some proceed from without, and others from within.

The world endeavours, at one time, to seduce, at another, to terrify us from the performance of our duty.

DISC. In the arts of seduction it is skilful.

IX.

Whatever may be a man's turn, or temper, there are objects fitted to lay hold of it. There is honour for the ambitious, wealth for the selfish, and pleasure for the gay. Unsuspicious of mischief, we are apt to close with proposals of this kind immediately, without considering the terms on which they are offered, or the consequences which may follow. Not so the Son of God, our great pattern and example. In the day of his temptation, "the kingdoms of the world," with their glories and their delights, were set before him. But he knew that it *was* the day of temptation, the hour of trial, on which all depended; he weighed the condition annexed; "if thou wilt worship me, all shall be thine;" he called to mind what was written, and discomfited the tempter at once: "Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Thus, of old time, to the mind of the patriarch Joseph, when beset by a formidable

dable temptation, the proper thought occurred:—“How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” And the offers of the king of Moab to Balaam were, at first, rejected, with this noble declaration: “If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less, or more.” Balaam found his integrity put to the test, and the question was, whether he would serve God, or Mammon.

DISC.
IX.

When the world cannot seduce, it will persecute. The example of him who standeth, is a reproof to those who are fallen, and who are determined to rise no more. So saying, or so doing, thou reproachest us; and that we will not bear: say as we say, and do as we do, or expect our utmost vengeance; we will sell you to the Ismaelites, or deliver you up to the Romans.

In the xith chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, some persons are mentioned, of

DISC. this decided inflexible disposition, "who
 IX. " through faith wrought righteousness,"
 and never could be prevailed upon to
 change either their principles, or their
 practices. And now behold their situa-
 tion—" They had trial of cruel mocks-
 ings and scourgings, yea moreover of
 bonds and imprisonment. They were
 stoned, they were sawn asunder, were
 tempted, were slain with the sword;
 they wandered about in sheep-skins and
 goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tor-
 mented. They wandered in deserts and
 in mountains, and in dens and caves of
 the earth."—Poor, miserable, foolish crea-
 tures, below contempt! would the men of
 fashion perhaps exclaim. But what says
 the Apostle, in the most wonderful paren-
 thesis that ever was penned—" Of whom
 the world was not WORTHY!"

When the first Christians, in compliance
 with the strict injunctions of their God and
 Saviour, refused to defile themselves with
 the equally senseless and impious idolatry of
 their

their heathen neighbours, and all the other DISC.
abominations which composed it's train, IX.
the alternative was, to expire in the most
horrid tortures that evil men, instigated by
evil spirits, could devise for the purpose.
This was *their* day of trial; and, fiery as
it was, they "sustained the burthen and
"heat of it," without complaining. The
cross, as they well knew, led to a crown:
they took it up, and "bore it after Jesus."

Our trials (for ever blessed be God) are
not so severe; but, still, trials we have. If
any man form a resolution, steadily, through
life, to profess the doctrines, and practise
the duties of his religion, let not that man
imagine, because the *world* is now called
Christian, that he shall experience no op-
position from it. They whose minds and
affections are wholly given up to ambition,
avarice, intemperance, and impurity, what-
ever they may style themselves, or be styled
by others, are idolaters; they do, in effect,
still worship the deities of ancient Greece
and Rome; and from them the true disci-

DISC. ples of Christ will still suffer persecution;
 IX. will be loaded with opprobrious names;
 will be driven from society, as not caring
 to run to the same excess of riot and liber-
 tinism; and will be prevented from making
 their way, as they might otherwise fairly
 and honourably do, in life. It is said to be
 almost impossible, at this time, for a young
 man of rank to succeed, unless he first enter
 his name, and commence a member of cer-
 tain societies instituted for the purpose of
gaming. At this shrine he may sacrifice his
 time, his rest, his estate, his temper, his
 conscience, the peace of his mind, and the
 health of his body. Costly oblations, and
 bitter pangs! It may be questioned, whether
 the sufferings of a primitive martyr would
 not constitute the more eligible lot of the
 two. The agonies could not be more acute,
 and they would be sooner over.

There is another source of trouble and
 uneasiness from without, though of a less
 important kind. It is that produced by the
 cross tempers, untoward dispositions, and
 other

other failings of those about us. These we sometimes, in a peevish hour, think to be more than human nature can bear. But the truth is, that our own tempers are not yet what they should be, and what these trials are intended to make them. It is forgotten that we ourselves have ill humours, and we are offended if our friends do not readily excuse and forgive them: yet we cannot excuse and forgive those of others. This is unreasonable and unjust; it is an inequality and roughness, which time and experience, by God's grace, must level and smooth; and we have reason to be thankful, if we are placed in a situation, which may contribute to effect so good and necessary a work. The fine observation made by a great critic upon the behaviour of our first parents after their transgression, as described by Milton, well deserves to be remembered by us all. "Discord begins in mutual frailty, and ought to cease in mutual forbearance".

* Johnson's Life of Milton, p. 164. edit. Hawkins.

Thus

DISC. Thus much for the trials brought upon
IX. us by the world from without. There are
 others which have their origin from within,
 from the frame and constitution either of
 body or mind.

To have all relish for the pleasures of
 life taken from us at once; to be cast on
 the bed of sickness, and to be there confined
 for days, weeks, months—perhaps, for years;
 this is a trial which, at a distance, wears a
 most tremendous aspect; and would cause
 the heart of the stoutest man to sink, who,
 in the midst of health and vigour, should
 receive undoubted intelligence, that it was
 soon to be his portion. But let not any per-
 son alarm and terrify himself with thoughts
 of this kind; for besides that it is folly to
 anticipate evil, and suffer before the time;
 He who sends trials, sends strength to sup-
 port his servants under them. It is won-
 derful to see how soon the temper is altered,
 and conforms itself to it's situation; how
 the mighty are bowed down, and the
 haughty are humbled; with what meek-
 ness

ness and patience a long series of weakness and pain is borne, till the sufferer "comes forth as gold," a vessel purified and polished, and every way fitted "for the Master's use," with this inscription upon it: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted."

DISC.
IX.

Another temptation is that from melancholy, or dejection of spirits, as we commonly style it; when the spirit, which sustains a man's other infirmities, is broken, and needeth itself to be sustained; when favourite studies and pursuits please no longer; when the whole creation seems changed, and appears — we know not why — dull and dreary; when the mind is ready to give up every thing, and sink into listlessness and despondency. He who finds himself in this situation, has no time to lose. When a skilful physician has been consulted, that it may be known how far the body is concerned, the mind is to be roused and goaded into action. Constant employment must be found for it, lest its powers

DISC. powers be turned inward, to fret, and wear,
IX. and prey upon itself. In the use of these means, let prayer be continually offered to Him, who can bring light out of darkness, and make the sorrowful heart to sing for joy; with patience and resignation let the sufferer trust in the Lord, and stay himself upon his God.

The time would fail me to enumerate all the different temptations which arise in our minds. They are as many, and as various, as our different passions and propensities, each of which will, at times, strive for the mastery, and all of which are to be kept, with a strong and steady hand, in due subordination and obedience.

The subject shall be left upon your minds with the following admonition of a pious French writer —

Include yourself within the compass of your own heart. If it be not large, it is deep; and you will there find exercise enough.

enough. You will never be able to found DISC.
it; it cannot be known but by him who IX.
tries the thoughts and the reins. But dive
into the subject as deep as you can. Exa-
mine yourself; and the knowlege of that
which passes there, will be of more use to
you than the knowlege of all that passes in
the world. Concern not yourself with the
wars and quarrels of public or private per-
sons. Take cognizance of those contests
which are between the flesh and the spirit;
betwixt the law of the members and that
of the understanding. Appease those dif-
ferences. Teach the flesh to be in subjec-
tion. Replace reason on her throne, and give
her piety for her counsellor. Tame your
passions, and bring them under bondage.
Put your little state in good order; govern
wisely and holily that numerous people
contained in your small dominions; that
multitude of thoughts, opinions, and affec-
tions, which are in your heart; till all re-
bellion be subdued, and the kingdom of
heaven established within you^b.

^b Jurieu's Method of Christian Devotion, Part III.
chap. iii.

enough. You will never be able to found a race
 it; it cannot be known but by him who
 sees the thoughts and the true. But dive
 into the subject as deep as you can. You
 mine yourself; and the knowledge of that
 which passes there, will be of more use to
 you than the knowledge of all that passes in
 the world. Concern not yourself with the
 wars and quarrels of public or private per-
 sons. Take cognizance of those contests
 which are between the flesh and the spirit;
 bewitch the law of the fragments and that
 of the understanding. Against those dis-
 tances, teach the flesh to be in subjec-
 tion. Replace reason on her throne, and give
 her pity for her counsellor. Tame your
 passions, and bring them under bondage.
 Put your little state in good order; govern
 wisely and boldly that numerous people
 contained in your small dominions; that
 multitude of thoughts, opinions, and affec-
 tions, which are in your heart; all will re-
 sult in the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of
 heaven established within you.

DISCOURSE X.

THE HOLY GHOST A COMFORTER.

JOHN XIV. 16.

I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.

THE words present to us in a little disc. compass, what it is the design of x. the Scripture to describe at large, namely, the sacred *Three* united in the work of man's redemption. Here is the Son interceding, the Father granting, and the Spirit coming, as upon this day, to form the church, and ever after to preserve and sanctify it. "I will pray the Father, and
" he

DISC. "he shall give you another Comforter,
x. "that he may abide with you for ever."

It is impossible to cast the subject into a better method, than that offered by the words themselves, as they stand in the text. They direct us to consider,

I. The prayer of Christ; "I will pray
 "the Father."

When we read of the Son praying, we may be induced to think, that the person praying must necessarily be inferior to the person to whom prayer is made. We shall reason, as the Apostle elsewhere does: "Without all doubt, the greater is intreated by the less." It is God who is intreated; it is a man who intreats; "there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, who is a man." He is so; but it is "the man Christ Jesus;" it is a man, very differently circumstanced from all other men that ever were born, and far above them all: it is a man,
 to

to whom God was pleased to be united: D I S C.
God was in Christ; in him dwelt all the X.
fulness of the Godhead bodily; God manifest in the flesh; the divine word made flesh; and dwelling among us; as, to prefigure this great event in old time, Jehovah came down from heaven, and filled the holy temple, built for his reception. "Destroy this temple," says Christ, speaking of his body, "and I" (as God—for God only could do so) "will raise it again, in three days."

The truth is, they who differ from us, and oppose us, upon this great point, affirm Christ to be man, which we never deny; but they cannot, while allowing the Scripture, disprove his being likewise God, which is what we affirm. "God and man are one Christ," as our Church teaches us rightly to confess.

While therefore it is a man, who mediates, intercedes, and prays, it is this circumstance of his being a man, in whom

DISC. ^{x.} God dwells, and to whom God is in an especial manner united, which gives to his mediation, his intercession, his prayer, that virtue and effect, that force and power, which otherwise they could not have; for what, I beseech you, is the prayer of a man, a mere man, however upright and pure, that it should prevail for the pardon of all other men being sinners, and obtain for them from the Father the gift of the Holy Spirit?—And for this reason it is, that they who deny the doctrine of our Lord's divinity, have been forced to deny also that of his priesthood and intercession.

If we look forward to the xvth chapter of St. John's Gospel, ver. 26. we find the same person, who says, in the words of the text, "I will pray the Father, and he shall send a Comforter"—we find him uttering these words—"The Comforter whom *I will send* from the Father." He therefore who, in one capacity, prays that the Comforter may be sent, in another is the person who sends him, being joined in

in authority and power with the Father. DISC.

“He and the Father are one.” Many are x.
the passages of this kind, which can be explained and reconciled on no other principle, but that adopted and maintained by the church, concerning the twofold nature of Christ. The Spirit is called, in some places, “the Spirit of the Father^a,” in others, “the Spirit of the Son^b,” he proceedeth from both.

How pleasing, how comfortable a consideration is it, that we have an intercessor on high; through whose prayer to the Father, not only the good things of this world, redeemed from the curse by him who first created them, and made again salutary and holy, are granted to us anew; but we receive also the great, the supreme, the unspeakable gift, the gift of the divine Spirit, one with the Father and the Son, blessed and glorified for evermore!

II. From the Son praying, let us there-

^a Matt. x. 12.

^b Gal. iv. 6.

DISC. fore turn our thoughts to the Father granting: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you."—When a Son asks, a Father can give: the one is gracious to prevail, the other easy to be intreated. The request was not preferred in a cold and languid manner. "He made supplication" (as the Apostle speaks) "with strong crying and tears." And still louder was the voice of his blood from the earth, "speaking better things than that of Abel;" the one crying for mercy, as the other did for vengeance.

III. The gift thus requested and obtained was that of a Comforter: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you a Comforter."

With respect to the Apostles, this was a gift eminently in season. Various, as we know, are the powers and favours of the Spirit, suited to the various wants of mankind. To those who are ignorant, he is the Spirit of knowledge; to those who are perplexed

plexed with doubts and difficulties, he is DISC.
the Spirit of truth; to those polluted by X.
sin, he is the Spirit of holiness. But the
Apostles, at the time when our Lord spoke
these words, were in a state of melancholy;
sorrow had filled their hearts; comfort was
that of which they stood in need: comfort
was promised, and, as upon this day, a
Comforter was sent. Grief chills the heart,
and congeals the spirits: he descended there-
fore in fire, to warm and to expand: he
descended in the form of *tongues*, bringing
the word of consolation, that good word,
which maketh glad the heart of man. The
effect appeared accordingly; for in such a
manner was the sorrow of the Apostles
turned into joy, that when they preached
the Gospel to the people assembled from
different countries, their adversaries said,
“These men are full of new wine.” But
it was not the juice of the grape; in that
age, and in that country, none being ac-
customed, as St. Peter observed, to drink
wine in a morning: “These men are not
“drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but
“the third hour of the day,” or nine
o’clock,

DISC.
X. o'clock, for they began their reckoning from six. It was therefore wine (to use our Lord's expression) which they had "drank new in the kingdom of God;" they were filled with the Holy Ghost, with spiritual comfort, spiritual joy and exultation. Instead of fearing and flying from their enemies, as before, at the apprehension and crucifixion of their Master, they now boldly faced them, prepared to stand before rulers, to "speak of God's testimonies even before kings, without being ashamed." They were no longer grieved or offended at the thought of suffering for the truth; they rejoiced in tribulation of that sort, and conceived themselves to have acquired a new dignity, when "counted *worthy* so to suffer." Such was the mighty change wrought in their minds, through the power of "the Holy Ghost, the Comforter."

A change is wrought in the minds of Christians, through every age, by the power of the same divine spirit.

On

On the ministers of the Gospel he does DISC.
not indeed confer, immediately and by mi- X.
racle, the gift of divers languages; but it
is he who inclines them to learn languages,
for the purpose of understanding the Scrip-
tures; to apply themselves carefully and
conscientiously to the studies and duties of
their profession; to preach with force and
effect that word, which is in the hearts of
men as fire, enlightening the dark, warm-
ing the cold, melting the hard, and puri-
fying the defiled. It is he who "gives
" them the tongue of the learned," who
both disposes and enables them "to speak a
" word in season to him that is weary," and
stands in need of consolation, till "in the
" midst of the sorrows that are in his
" heart heavenly comforts refresh his soul."

Our commission is the same with that of
our blessed Master, which he opened at
Nazareth, in the words of Isaiah—"The
" Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, be-
" cause the Lord hath anointed me to
" preach good tidings to the meek; he
" hath sent me to bind up the broken
" hearted,

p i s c. " hearted, to proclaim liberty to the cap-
 tives, and the opening of the prison to
 those that are bound; to proclaim the
 acceptable year of the Lord, to comfort
 all that mourn; to appoint unto them
 that mourn in Sion, to give unto them
 beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for
 mourning, the garment of praise for
 the spirit of heaviness, that they might
 be called trees of righteousness, the
 planting of the Lord, that he might be
 glorified."

What a variety of sublime and beautiful
 expressions is here employed to shew, that
 our Gospel, as it proceeds from the Holy
 Ghost the Comforter, is and must ever be
 a Gospel of comfort!

But to whom is it such? To many it is
 not; they find no comfort in it; they hate
 and dread the sight or the thought of it.
 It is such only to the poor in spirit, to the
 meek, and to the mourners; to those who
 have been made sensible of their fallen
 estate,

estate, and of the sins they have committed; to those who by true repentance have cast out and put away their sins from them; to these it is a cordial indeed: but a cordial can be of no service, it will be of much disservice, if administered (should any unskilfully administer it) when the habit is loaded with humours, and the stomach overwhelmed and oppressed by crudities. A cordial here is not the remedy immediately wanted: proper discipline must prepare the way for it.

The Spirit comforts, by *strengthening*, as the word, in our language, intimates. He is the Spirit of power, might, and courage, which are conferred upon us, in our due degree and measure, as they were upon the Apostles. When convinced of the truth, we are no longer afraid to confess, to defend, or to practise it, before men, even the greatest men. We are not ashamed of being singular at any time in doing our duty, nor offended and grieved because we cannot have the approbation of those,

DISC. those, whose approbation is not worth
x. having; since of what consequence to a
 wise man is the opinion of such, as he
 thinks and knows to be, in this particu-
 lar matter, not wise? *Tongues* were given
 to be employed in speech; and they should
 be employed (by the ministers of Christ
 more especially) with all freedom and bold-
 ness, in telling the people of their sins,
 calling them to repentance, and proclaim-
 ing to all the Gospel of pardon and peace.

Such is the gift prayed for by the Son,
 and bestowed on the church by the Father:
 "I will pray the Father, and he shall give
 "you a Comforter."

IV. He is styled, in the text, "*Another*
 "Comforter." While Christ continued to
 be present in person with his disciples, *he*
 was their Comforter. But, as he had in-
 formed them, he was about to leave them;
 to ascend into that glory, from whence he
 descended; "the glory he had with the
 "Father, before the world was." The
 church

church therefore would find herself in a melancholy, forlorn, and widowed state. DISC.
X.

“How can the children of the bridechamber fast,” (or mourn) said he, “while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them; and then shall they mourn in those days.” The days immediately following Christ’s ascension, were to be days of darkness and sorrow, of great tribulation, and severe persecution, first from Jews, and then from Gentiles. The disciples must have sunk under a trial like this, the church must have failed in it’s very beginning, and the Gospel have perished from among men, had it not been for the promise and the grant of another Comforter, or *advocate*, as the word also signifies.

It was expedient that Christ should go away; that he should go into heaven, to appear in the presence of God for us, and to be our advocate *there*, to answer the slanders and calumnies of the great accuser
of

DISC. of the brethren, who accuseth them before
X. the throne: that he should not only do this, but rescue and save us, even when the accusation was true. "There is one "that accuseth you," (said Christ) "even "Moses." The law accuses and condemns us all, because we all have broken it, and are become guilty before God, as a law-giver and a judge. But what saith mercy, by the Gospel? "Deliver the man; I have "found a ransom." Christ was first our priest; he offered himself a sacrifice for our sins; and then went, with his own blood, into the holy places, to make atonement for those, as sinners, whose innocence, otherwise, as advocate, he could not defend. On this foot he went, to reinstate us in the favour of God; to take possession of heaven for us, as our surety and representative, "the first-born among many "brethren;" to prepare a place for us against that great and joyful day, when he shall return in like manner as he went, to receive us to himself, that where he is, there we may be also.

In

In the mean time, while this was doing Disc.
x.
above, there was need of another advocate, or Comforter, below; and he supplied the absence of his body, by the presence of his Spirit; so that in all our troubles, under every possible calamity that can befall us, there is help at hand, both in heaven and on earth; in heaven, Christ mediating; on earth, the Spirit comforting. Of this latter it is said, that he also "maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered," praying with us, and in us, "bearing witness, with our spirit, that we are the children of God," adopted sons, redeemed from the world, and evidenced to be so, by the testimony of a conscience purged from sin, through faith, and the spirit of holiness. "My conscience," says the apostle, "beareth me witness in the Holy Ghost"—an expression, which answers exactly to that other; "the Spirit witnesseth with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

We come now to the last clause in my text;

DISC. text; "I will pray the Father, and he
x. "shall give you another Comforter, that
 "he may abide with you for ever."

We may consider this as spoken by Christ of the Holy Spirit, in contradistinction to himself. I go away, but he shall abide. The enjoyment of good, when obtained, may be, and generally is, damped and diminished, by the apprehension of losing it again. The disciples found, that their blessed Master was about to be taken from them. They might fear the same, respecting this other Comforter, who was promised, lest he too should, after a while, forsake them. But this was not to happen. The Son vouchsafed to descend from heaven for a certain purpose, and for a certain time necessary to accomplish that purpose: then he returned back to his celestial mansion. Though the disciples had known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth they were to know him so no more. The office graciously sustained by the Spirit, in the scheme of man's redemption, requires
 his

his constant abode and superintendence. Of DISC.
the perpetuity of his influence we are there- X.
fore assured, "to our great and endless
"comfort."

And herein it is, that heavenly comforts differ from earthly ones. These may be used for a time; but they perish with the using, and we must look for others. Riches make themselves wings; of a still more uncertain tenure are fame and honour; and pleasures are more fleeting than either. They flutter about us, for a little while, in the season of health and prosperity. But the day of sickness and trouble must come; and then, where are they, or what can they avail? Between us and the world the curtain will be soon drawn for ever; the things of the world can be of no farther concern or service. To the mind's eye will appear, above, the judge in glory; below, the earth in flames. Pain will distract, conscience will accuse, and friends will forsake. The man of the world, looking round on those perishing idols, whom he has worshipped,
and

DISC. and to whom he has sacrificed his eternal
 X.
 — interests, will exclaim, in the anguish of
 despair—may no person here present ever
 know it but by description! — “Surely,
 “miserable comforters are ye all!”

In such comforters, therefore, put not
 your trust, for they will undoubtedly fail
 you in time of need. They are winter-
 brooks, overflowing when there is least oc-
 casion; but in the burning heat of summer,
 the thirsty traveller, who has recourse to
 them, for the relief of his necessity, finds
 them dry. Nay, when they are with you,
 in their highest perfection, their insuffi-
 ciency is ever experienced, though it may
 not be owned. No circle of pleasure is so
 complete, as not to leave a frightful void,
 to supply which, something of a far dif-
 ferent and superior kind is required. This
 has been repeatedly, and in sorrow of heart,
 complained of by persons possessing all that
 the world could give them, and finding
 nothing more of that sort to ask, or desire;
 yet has their existence become so wretched,
 that

that many of them have been tempted, and some prevailed upon, so far as lay in their power, to put a period to it; confessing themselves weary of treading the round of dissipation and insignificance, and willing rather to risk the torments of another world, than sustain the miseries of this, with all it's enjoyments full blown before them.

DISC.

X.

Seek then for comforts, which never fatigue, or cloy; for comforts, which, like the manna bestowed on the church in the wilderness, come down from heaven fresh every morning as they are wanted, suited to every taste, and satisfying every capacity. Seek for comforts, which abide for ever, attending you through sickness, pain, age, and death, to that land of promise, where the manna ceases to descend, only because you are admitted to the presence of him from whom it descended, and the streams become needless, when you can drink at the fountain.

that many of them have been stripped, and some
 have prevailed upon, to lay as lay in their
 power, to put a period to it; contending
 themselves weary of treading the round of
 dissipation and insignificance, and willing
 rather to risk the comments of another
 world, than sustain the ridicule of this,
 with all its enjoyments still blown before
 them. The Holy Ghost is not to be
 sought then for consoling, which never la-
 ziness, or sloth; for consoling, which, like
 the manna bestowed on the church in the
 wilderness, come down from heaven itself
 every morning as they are wanted, fitted
 to every taste, and satisfying every capacity;
 seek for consolation, which abide for ever,
 attending you through sickness, pain, age,
 and death, to that land of promise, where
 the manservants to descend, only because
 you are admitted to the presence of him
 from whom it descended, and that servant
 become a master, when you can drink at
 the fountain of life, and live in eternal
 life.

DISCOURSE XI.

GOVERNMENT OF THE THOUGHTS.

PROV. IV. 23.

*Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are
the issues of life.*

THE heart in the body is the well-
spring of life. From thence the
blood proceeds, and thither it returns.
Purge the fountain, therefore, and the
streams will flow pure.

When we treat of the mind, we use
the same word, to denote that centre and
source, from which all our thoughts issue ;
as when we say, a man has a *good heart*,

DISC.
XI.

DISC. or a *bad heart*. Out of the abundance of
 XI. the heart the mouth speaketh, and the
 hand acteth. He who never thinks any
 evil, will never speak any, or do any.
 Above all things, then, watch well your
thoughts. "Keep the heart with all dili-
 gence; for out of it are the issues of life."
 Purge the fountain, and the streams will
 flow pure.

But is this possible? it will be asked—
 Thoughts are volatile things; they arise
 without, or against one's will; and you may
 as well tell us to imprison the wind, as to
 keep them in order, when they are risen.
 The task is *difficult*, but not *so* difficult.
 It is difficult; but the greater will be the
 glory of performing it. It has been done,
 and therefore may be done again. It is
 not impossible, for then it had never been
 commanded. "Keep the heart *with all*
"diligence;" do your best, and, by God's
 grace, you will succeed.

The right government of the thoughts,
 to

to be sure, requires no small art, vigilance, DISC.
and resolution. But it is a matter of such XI.
vast importance to the peace and improvement of the mind, that it is worth while to be at some pains about it. For a little consideration will shew us, that our happiness or unhappiness depends generally upon our own thoughts. What happens without us does not produce either one or the other, but our thought and apprehension about it. The same kind of accident which deprives one person of his reason, will give little or no concern to another; nor can any affliction, perhaps, befall the children of men, which some have not borne with cheerfulness and ease.

It will be readily allowed, that a man who has so numerous and turbulent a family to govern, which are too apt to be at the command of his passions and appetites, ought not to be long from home. If he be, they will soon grow mutinous and disorderly under the conduct of those two headstrong guides, and raise great clamours

DISC. and disturbances, sometimes on very slight
XI. occasions indeed. And a more dreadful scene of misery can hardly be imagined, than that which is occasioned by such a tumult and uproar within; when a raging conscience, or inflamed passions are let loose, without check or controul. A city in flames is but a faint emblem, or the mutiny of intoxicated mariners, who have murdered their commander, and are destroying one another. The torment of the mind, under such an insurrection and ravage, is not easy to be conceived. The most revengeful person in the world cannot wish his enemy a greater.

A wise heathen * very justly observes, that a man is seldom rendered unhappy by his ignorance of the thoughts of others; but he that does not attend to the motions of his own, is certainly miserable. Yet look around you, and what do you behold? People ranging and roving all the world over, ransacking every thing, gazing at the

* The emperor MARCUS ANTONINUS.

stars above, digging into the bowels of the earth below, diving into other men's bosoms, never considering all the while, that the care of their own minds is neglected. He who spends so much of his time *abroad*, must expect to find strange doings, when he comes *home*.

DISC.

XI.

A very ingenious and sensible writer has observed, that the selection of our thoughts is of equal consequence with the choice of our company. Permit me to adopt his ideas as the ground-work of the following discourse, adding withal such other reflections as have occurred in a course of meditation on the subject.

Let us consider our thoughts as so much company, and enquire, which of them one would wish to exclude and send away, which to let in and receive; because it is much easier to prevent disagreeable visitants from entering, than to get rid of them when they are entered. It will be a great matter therefore to have a trusty porter at

DISC. the gate; to keep a good guard at the door
 XI. by which bad thoughts come in, and to
 avoid those occasions which commonly excite them.

In the first place, then, it may be taken for granted, no one would choose to entertain guests that were *peevish* and *discontented* with every thing. Their room is certainly much better than their company. They are uneasy in themselves, and will soon make the whole house so; like wasps, that are not only restless, but will cause universal uneasiness, and sting the family. Watch therefore against all thoughts of this kind, which do but chafe and corrode the mind to no purpose. To harbour these is to do yourself more injury than it is in the power of your greatest enemy to do you. It is equally a Christian's *interest* and duty to "learn, in whatsoever state he is, there-
 "with to be content."

There is another set of people, who are not the most comfortable companions in the world;

world; such as are evermore *anxious* about Disc.
what is to happen, *fearful* of every thing, xi.
and *apprehensive* of the worst. Open not
the door to thoughts of this complexion;
since, by giving way to tormenting fears
and suspicions of some approaching danger,
or troublesome event, you not only antici-
pate, but double the evil you fear; and
undergo much more from the apprehension
of it before it comes, than from the whole
weight of it when present. Are not all
these events under the direction of a wise
and gracious Providence? If they befall you,
they constitute that share of suffering which
God hath appointed you, and which he ex-
pects you should bear as a Christian. He
who sends trials, will send strength. Your
being miserable before hand will not keep
them off, or enable you to bear them when
they come. But suppose (as it often hap-
pens) they never come; then you have made
yourself wretched, perhaps twenty years to-
gether, for nothing; and all would have
been just as it is, if you had never had an
uneasy thought about it. How often has
your

DISC. your fear magnified evils at a distance,
XI. which you have found infinitely less in reality, than in appearance! Learn to trust God, and be at peace; "in quietness and confidence shall be your strength."

You esteem it a dreadful thing to be obliged to live with persons who are *passionate* and *quarrelsome*. You undoubtedly judge right; it is like living in a house that is on fire. Dismiss therefore, as soon as may be, all *angry* and *wrathful* thoughts. They canker the mind, and dispose it to the worst temper in the world, that of fixed malice and revenge. Never recal the ideas or ruminate upon past injuries and provocations. This is the *amusement* of many in their solitary hours; but they might as well play with cannon-balls, or thunderbolts. They may work themselves up to distraction; to hate every thing, and every body; and to have the temper and disposition of the *Destroyer* himself. Anger may *steal* into the heart of a wise man; but it *rests* only in the bosom of fools. Make the most candid allowances for

for the offender. Consider his natural temper. Turn your anger into pity. Regard him as ill of a very bad distemper. Think of the patience and meekness of Christ, and the petition in the Lord's Prayer; how much you stand in need of forgiveness yourself both from God and man; and how foolish it is to torment yourself, because he has behaved amiss. The Apostle's precept in this case is, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." The Pythagoreans, a sect of heathen philosophers, are said to have practised it literally, who if at any time in a passion they had broken out into abusive language, before sunset gave each other their hands, and with them a discharge from all injuries; and so, with a mutual reconciliation, parted friends. Above all things, be sure to set a guard on the tongue, while the angry mood is upon you. The least spark may break out into a conflagration, when cherished by a resentful heart, and fanned by the wind of an angry breath. Aggravating expressions, at such a time, are like oil thrown upon the flames.

In

DISC. In anger, as well as in a fever, it is good
XI. to have the tongue kept clean and smooth.

Whoever has been much conversant with the world must have often met with *filly*, *trifling*, and *unreasonable* people, who are to be found every where, and thrust themselves into all companies; who will talk for ever about nothing; and whose conversation, if you could enjoy it a month together, would neither instruct nor entertain you. How far preferable is solitude to such society! There are *filly*, *trifling*, and *unreasonable thoughts* as well as persons; such are always about, and if care be not taken, will get into the mind we know not how, and seize and possess it before we are aware; they will hold it in empty idle speculations, which yield it neither pleasure nor profit, and turn to no manner of account upon earth; only consume time, and prevent a better employment of the mind. And, indeed, there is little difference whether we spend the time in sleep, or in these waking dreams. Nay, if the thoughts
 which

which thus insensibly steal upon the mind disc.
 be not altogether absurd and nonsensical, xi.
 yet if they be impertinent and unseasonable,
 they ought to be dismissed, because they
 keep out better company.

There is something particularly tiresome
 in your projectors and castle-builders, who
 will detain you for hours with relations of
 their improbable and impracticable schemes,
 taking you off, as well as themselves, all
 the while, from the plain duties of common
 life; from doing your business, or enjoying
 your friends. One would never be *at home*
 to this sort of visitants. Give your porter
 therefore directions to be in a more especial
 manner upon his guard against all *wild* and
extravagant thoughts, all *vain* and *fantasti-*
cal imaginations. Suffer not your mind to
 be taken up with thoughts of things that
 never were, and perhaps never will be; to
 seek after a visionary pleasure in the prospect
 of what you have not the least reason to
 hope, or a needless pain in the apprehen-
 sion of what you have not the least reason
 to

DISC. to fear. It is unknown how much time is
31. wasted by many persons in these airy and
 chimerical schemes; while they neglect
 their duty to God and man, and even their
 own worldly interest; thus losing the sub-
 stance by grasping at the shadow, and
 dreaming themselves princes, till they
 awake beggars. The truth is, next to a
 clear conscience and sound judgement,
 there is not a greater blessing than a re-
 gular and well governed imagination; to
 be able to view things as they are, in their
 true light, and proper colours; and to dis-
 tinguish the false images that are painted
 on the fancy, from the representations of
 truth and reason. For how common a
 thing is it for men, before they are aware,
 to confound reason and fancy, truth and
 imagination together; to think they believe
 things true or false, when they only fancy
 them to be so; and fancy them to be so,
 because they would have them so; as some
 have told a story, knowing it to be false,
 till by degrees they have come to think it
 true.

There

There is one sort of guests, who are no strangers to the mind of man, of an Englishman, it is said, above others. These are *gloomy* and *melancholy* thoughts. There are times and seasons, when to some every thing appears dismal and disconsolate, though they know not why. A black cloud hangs hovering over their minds; which, when it falls in showers through their eyes, is dispersed; and all is serene again. This is often purely mechanical; and owing either to some fault in the bodily constitution, or some accidental disorder in the animal frame. It comes on in a dark month, a thick sky, and an east wind; it may be owing in part to our situation as islanders, and in part to the grossness and heaviness of our diet, attended, as it frequently is among those of better condition, who are chiefly subject to this malady, with the want of a due degree of exercise and labour. In this case, the advice of an honest and skilful physician may be of eminent service. Constant employment and a cheerful friend are two excellent remedies.

Certain

DISC.

XI.

DISC. Certain however it is, that whatever means
XI. can be devised, they should instantly and incessantly be used, to drive away such dreary and desponding imaginations ; for to admit and indulge them would be as if one was to quit the warm precincts of day, to take leave of life and the sun, and to pass one's time amidst the damps and darkness of a funereal vault. Our faculties, in such circumstances, would be benumbed, and we should soon become, ourselves, useless to all the purposes of our being, like the inhabitants of the tomb, who sleep in death.

It is needless to say, that we should repel all *impure* and *lascivious* thoughts, which taint and defile the mind, and which, though hidden from men, are known to God, in whose eye they are abominable ; because, if we possess a fair character, and frequent good company, it is to be hoped they will not have the assurance to knock at the door.

Lastly,

Lastly, with abhorrence reject immediately all *profane* and *blasphemous* thoughts, which are sometimes suddenly injected into the mind, we know not *how*, though we may give a pretty good guess from *whence* ; unless indeed they proceed from some bodily weakness and indisposition ; in which case, as in a former one, the assistance of the physician may be more necessary than that of the divine. When the body is disordered, the mind will be so too ; and thoughts will arise in it, of which no account can be given. But let those who are thus afflicted know for their comfort, that bare thoughts will not be imputed to them for sins, while they do not cherish and encourage them, but, on the contrary, exert all their endeavours to expel and banish them ; which, with prayers for help from above, will not fail of success, in the end.

DISC.

XI.

These then are the thoughts, against which you should carefully guard : such as are peevish and discontented ; anxious and fearful ; passionate and quarrelsome ; silly

DISC. and trifling; vain and fantastical; gloomy
XI. and melancholy; impure and lascivious;
profane and blasphemous. A formidable
band! to whose importunity, more or less,
every one is subject. Reason, aided and
inspired by the grace of God, must watch
diligently at the gate, either to bar their
entrance, or drive them out forthwith when
entered, not only as impertinent, but mis-
chievous intruders, that will otherwise for
ever destroy the peace and quiet of the
family.

The best method, after all, perhaps, is,
to contrive matters so, as to be always *pre-
engaged*, when they come; engaged with
better company; and then there will be
no room for *them*. For other kind of
thoughts there are, to which, when they
stand at the door and knock, the porter
should open immediately; which you should
let in and receive, retain and improve, to
your souls' health and happiness.

The grand secret in this, as in many
other

other cases, is *employment*. An empty DISC.
house is every body's property. All the XI.
vagrants about the country will take up
their quarters in it. Always therefore have
something to do, and you will always have
something to think of. God has placed
every person in some station; and every
station has a set of duties belonging to it.
Did we not forget or neglect these, evil
thoughts would sue for admission in vain.
Indeed, they would not come near our
dwelling, any more than idle, vain, profligate
people would think of visiting and
teasing a man who laboured constantly for
his daily bread. If there be any one, who
is of opinion, that his station does not find
him employment, or that it privileges him
to be idle, let him only suppose, for a moment,
that when his soul shall quit his
body, and appear before God, he be asked
the two following questions — Whether he
could not have done more good in the world?
and, Why he did not?

But besides the duties we owe to others,

DISC. there is a person very dear to every one of
XI. us, who claims no small share of attention
and regard, I mean *self*. Each man's mind
is a little estate, at his own door, which is
to be brought into order, and kept in order.
It is naturally a wilderness; it is to be con-
verted into a garden. Weeds and thistles
must be rooted up; flowers and fruits must
be planted and cultivated. Evil tempers
and dispositions must be dispossessed; and
good ones introduced in their place. Hus-
bandmen and gardeners, if they mind their
business, have enough to think of. Who
can say his mind is yet completely in that
state, in which he wishes it to be? And
even if it were, should his diligence be
ever so little remitted, it would soon be out
of that state again. He, therefore, who
will receive and entertain all thoughts that
tend to the improvement of his mind,
needeth never complain of being without
company.

For this purpose, Wisdom spreads her
ample page before him; the book of uni-
versal

verfal knowlege lies open to his inspection; and he may enrich his understanding with the experience of ages and generations. The life of one man is like the life of another; and he cannot find himself in circumstances, in which his predecessors have not been before him, and his successors shall not be after him. Hence the proper use of *history*; and above all history, that which relates the *lives* of persons in stations fimilar to our own. But there is no knowlege which may not be turned to use by him, who reads with a faithful and honest intention of being the better for it, by applying all for his own correction and amendment. In the moral world, though not in the natural, there is a *philosopher's stone*, which transmutes all metals into gold. Of the present age it may certainly be said with truth, that it is an age of science. The communication has been opened, by commerce, with all parts of the world. The prophet Daniel's prediction is fulfilled. "Many run to and fro, and knowlege is increased." "Wisdom crieth without,"

DISC.

XI.

DISC. but Folly has the louder voice, and prevents
 XI. her from being heard, as she should be. Move a little out of the noise of one, and the sound of the other will steal gently upon the ear. Through that she will take possession of the heart, and introduce visitors, of whom you need never to be ashamed.

The heart, however, is capacious; still there is room—And lo, a procession appears advancing towards us, which will fill up every part—led on by one, in whose air reigns native dignity, and in whose countenance majesty and meekness sit enthroned together; all the virtues unite their various lustres in her crown, around which spring the ever blooming flowers of paradise. We acknowledge at once the queen of heaven, fair RELIGION, with her lovely train; *Faith*, ever musing on the holy book; *Hope*, resting on her sure anchor, and bidding defiance to the tempests of life; *Charity*, blessed with a numerous family around her, thinking no ill of any one, and doing good

good to every one; *Repentance*, with gleams of comfort brightening a face of sorrow, like the sun shining through a watery cloud; *Devotion*, with eyes fixed on heaven; *Patience*, smiling at affliction; *Peace*, carrying, on a golden sceptre, the dove and the olive-branch; and *Joy*, with an anthem-book, singing an Hallelujah! Listen to the leader of this celestial band, and she will tell you all you can desire to know. She will carry you to the blissful bowers of Eden; she will inform you how they were lost, and how they are to be regained. She will point out the world's Redeemer, exhibited from the beginning in figure and prophecy, while the patriarchs saw his day at a distance, and the people of God were trained, by their schoolmaster the Law, to the expectation of him. She will shew you how all events from the creation tended to this great end, and all the distinguished persons, who have appeared upon the stage, performed their parts in the universal drama, the empires of the world rising and falling in obedience to the appointment of

DISC.
XI.

DISC. Providence, for the execution of his coun-
XI. fels. At length, in the fulness of time,
she will make known to you the appearance of the long desired Saviour; explaining the reasons of his humble birth, and holy life; of all he said, and all he did; of his unspeakable sufferings; his death and burial; his triumphant resurrection, and glorious ascension. She will take you within the veil, and give you a sight of Jesus, for the suffering of death, crowned with honour and immortality, and receiving homage from the hosts of heaven, and the spirits of just men made perfect. She will pass over the duration of time and the world, and place before your eyes the throne of judgment, and the unalterable sentence; the glories of the righteous, and the miseries of the wicked.— The thoughts suggested by this variety of interesting subjects, are thoughts which well deserve admittance; and if you will please to admit them, we may venture to say, “the house will be furnished with “guests.”

Such

Such guests you would wish to retain ; DISC.
such thoughts to cherish and improve. XI.

For this purpose, when you have started a good thought, pursue it ; do not presently lose sight of it, or suffer any trifling fancy, that may intervene, to divert you from it. Dismiss it not, till you have sifted it, and exhausted it, and well considered the different consequences and inferences that result from it. However, retain not the subject any longer than you find your thoughts run freely upon it ; for to confine them to it, when it is quite worn out, is to give them an unnatural bent, without sufficient employment ; which will make them flag, or be more apt to fly off to something else.

And to keep the mind intent on the subject you think of, you must be at some pains to recal and refix your desultory and rambling thoughts. Lay open the subject in as many lights and views as it is capable of being represented in. Clothe your best
ideas

DISC.
XI. ideas in pertinent and well chosen words, deliberately pronounced, or commit them to writing. Accustom yourself to *speaking* naturally and reasonably on all subjects, and you will soon learn to *think* so on the best; especially, if you often converse with those persons who speak, and those authors who write, in that manner.

The sincerity of a true religious principle cannot be better known, than by the readiness with which the thoughts turn themselves to God, and the pleasure with which they are employed in devout exercises. And though a person may not always be so well pleased with hearing religious things talked of by others, whose different taste, sentiments, or manner of expression may have something disagreeable; yet if he have no inclination to think about them himself, or to converse with himself about them, he has great reason to suspect, that his heart is not right with God. But if he frequently and delightfully exercise his mind in divine contemplations,
it

it will not only be a good mark of his sincerity, but will habitually dispose it for the reception of the best and most useful thoughts, and fit it for the noblest entertainments. For if bad thoughts are as infectious as bad company, good thoughts solace, instruct, and entertain the mind like good company. And this is one great advantage of retirement, that a man may choose what company he pleases, from within himself.

DISC.

XI.

But as in the world we oftener light into bad company than good, so likewise even in solitude we are oftener troubled with impertinent and unprofitable thoughts, than entertained with agreeable and useful ones. And a person who has so far lost the command of himself, as to lie at the mercy of every foolish or vexatious thought, is much in the same situation as a *host*, whose house is open to all *comers*; whom, though ever so noisy, rude, and troublesome, he cannot get rid of; but with this difference, that

the

DISC. the *latter* hath some recompence for his
XI. trouble; the *former* none at all, but is
 robbed of his peace and quiet for nothing.

And let no one imagine, as too many
 are apt to do, that it is a matter of indif-
 ference what thoughts he entertains in his
 heart, since the reason of things concurs
 with the testimony of Scripture to assure
 us, that "the thought of foolishness,"
 when allowed by us, "is itself sin."
 Therefore, in the excellent words of an
 excellent poet^b,

Guard well thy thoughts; our thoughts are heard in
 heaven.

"Keep thy heart with all diligence, for
 "out of it are the issues of life."

And thou Almighty God, unto whom
 all hearts are open, all desires known, and
 from whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the

^b DR. YOUNG.

thoughts

thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

DISC.
XI.

come through Jesus Christ, our Lord,
love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy
of the Holy Spirit, that we may partake
thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration

DISCOURSE XII.

LIFE A JOURNEY.

PSALM CXIX. VERSE 19.

I am a Stranger in the earth!

AND was it, then, peculiar to the DISC.
son of Jesse, the sweet psalmist of XII.
Israel, to be so? No, surely; it is a character in which every son of Adam appears, and acts, upon the stage of life. We have all an home; but that home is in heaven. We are strangers in the earth; we are here in a foreign land, through which we travel to our native country, there to possess everlasting habitations. The author of the Epistle
tle

D I S C. tle to the Hebrews, having, in the eleventh
XII. chapter, celebrated the Old Testament wor-
 thies, and the wonders which they wrought,
 through the divine principle that was in
 them, sums up the account in the follow-
 ing words— “ These all died in faith, not
 “ having received the promises, but having
 “ seen them afar off, and were persuaded of
 “ them, and embraced them, and confessed
 “ that they were strangers and pilgrims on
 “ the earth. For they that say such things,
 “ declare plainly, that they seek a country.
 “ And truly, if they had been mindful of
 “ that country from whence they came out,
 “ they might have had opportunity to have
 “ returned : but now they desire a better
 “ country, that is an heavenly ; wherefore
 “ God is not ashamed to be called their
 “ God : for he hath prepared for them a
 “ city.”

Agreeably to this account, if we look
 into the story of those friends and favourites
 of heaven, the ancestors of the Israelitish
 nation, we find them sojourning in a land
 that

that was not theirs; dwelling only in tents, soon pitched, and as soon removed again; having no ground of their own to set their foot on, save only a possession of a burying place (and that purchased of the inhabitants), where they might rest from their travels, till they shall pass, at the resurrection of the just, to their durable inheritance, in the kingdom of God.

DISC.
XII.

Such was Jacob's notion of human life, expressed in his answer to the Egyptian monarch, who had enquired his age — “The days of the years of my pilgrimage,” says the patriarch, “are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers, in the days of their pilgrimage.”

Look at the posterity of Jacob, the chosen people of the most High, after they had been delivered from the house of bondage. View them likewise dwelling in

DISC. tents; sojourning, for forty years, in a vast
 XII. and howling wilderness; attacked by enemies; stung by serpents; and in danger of perishing, for want of provisions; but still supported by the hand of Providence, and at length conducted to the land of Promise. Consider, O Christian, this history, and in it behold thy pictured life!

When the children of Israel had taken possession of Canaan, they might be said in some sense to have obtained a settlement. But, in truth and propriety, what settlement can any man be said to have obtained, to whom will soon be brought (and he knows not how soon) the message which was brought to king Hezekiah—"Set thine house in order, for thou must die!" This was the case with the Israelites, no less after their settlement in the land of Canaan, than before it. Notwithstanding, therefore, the *rest* which God had there given them, you find David, in the xcvith Psalm, speaking of another future and distant *rest*, still, remaining for the people of God, in a better

a better country, that is, an heavenly. DISC.
XII.
And, accordingly, though settled in the promised land, you hear him still crying out, in the words of the text—"I am a
"stranger in the earth."

And what shall we say, with regard to the son of God himself, when, for us and for our salvation, in the form of man, he honoured this world with his presence? Did not he pass through it, as a foreigner, returning to the celestial mansions, from whence he descended? Did not he live and act as such, and was he not treated as such by those to whom he came? Yes, verily, he was a stranger and a sojourner here below, as all his fathers, according to the flesh, were before him, and as all his children, according to the spirit, have been, and must be after him, upon the earth. The rule is a general one, and admits of no exception.

A consideration thus striking and affecting cannot be without it's use in the regulation

DISC. lation of our manners: and I have some-
XII. where read of a pious old man, who being
 desired by a young pupil and disciple, to
 give him some one short precept, which
 might contain all religion in a little com-
 pass, and serve, at all times, and in all
 places, for the direction of his conduct
 through life—replied—“ Only remember,
 “ that you are a stranger in the earth.”

Let us therefore take this for our ground,
 that life is a journey, and man a traveller;
 and let us enquire, what manner of persons,
 upon this principle, we ought to be.

And here it will immediately occur to us,
 in the first place, that wherever, in the course
 of his journey, a traveller may be, his heart
 is still at home. Nothing can detain his
 thoughts, for any long time together, from
 his country, his house, and his family, to
 which he is returning. The spirit of man
 is not a native of this lower world. It
 came originally from above; and, upon the
 dissolution of the body, will return to God
 who

who gave it, to it's own proper country, DISC.
XII.
to the house and family of it's heavenly
Father. These, then, are the objects,
which, if once we are accustomed to re-
gard ourselves as strangers and sojourners
upon earth, will continually employ our
thoughts.

The end of our journey will ever be
uppermost in our minds, according to the
precepts delivered in the Scriptures, and
the examples afforded us by the prophets
and Apostles — “Set your affections on
“things above, not on things on the
“earth. Seek those things which are
“above, where Christ sitteth on the right
“hand of God. My soul hath a desire and
“longing to enter into the courts of the
“Lord; when shall I come, and appear
“before God! I desire to depart, and to
“be with Christ. Let us go forth, bear-
“ing our reproach; for here we have no
“continuing city, but we seek one to
“come.” These are the wishes and the
expressions of men like ourselves, encom-
passed

DISC. passed with the same infirmities. Why,
XII. then, are they not ours? Plainly, because
 we mistake or forget our true condition in
 this present world. We imagine ourselves
 to be at home, when we are really abroad,
 and upon a journey.

But although the traveller's first and
 chief delight is the recollection of his home,
 which lies as a cordial at his heart, and re-
 freshes him every where, and at all seasons,
 this does by no means prevent him from
 taking that pleasure in the several objects
 presenting themselves on the road, which
 they are capable of affording, and were in-
 deed intended to afford. He surveys, in
 passing, the works and beauties of nature
 and art, meadows covered with flocks, val-
 leys waving with corn, verdant woods,
 blooming gardens, and stately buildings.
 He surveys, and enjoys them perhaps,
 much more than their owners do, but
 leaves them without a sigh, reflecting on
 the far greater and sincerer joys that are
 waiting for him at home. Such exactly is
 the

the temper and disposition, with which the DISC.
Christian traveller should pass through the XII.
world. His religion does not require him to be gloomy and sullen, to shut his eyes, or to stop his ears; it debars him of no pleasure, of which a thinking and reasonable man would wish to partake. It directs him not to shut himself up in a cloister alone, there to mope and moan away his life; but to walk abroad, to behold the things which are in heaven and earth, and to give glory to him who made them; reflecting, at the same time, that if, in this fallen world, which is soon to be consumed by fire, there are so many objects to entertain and delight him, what must be the pleasures of that world, which is to endure for ever, and to be his eternal home! Flocks feeding in green meadows, by rivers of water, remind him of the future happy condition of the righteous, when “they
“ shall hunger no more, neither thirst any
“ more, for the Lamb which is in the
“ midst of the throne shall feed them, and
“ shall lead them unto living fountains of
“ water.”

DISC. "water." From fading plantations he carries his thoughts to the paradise of God, where, in immortal youth and beauty, grows the Tree of Life, whose leaf never withers, and which bears it's fruit through the unnumbered ages of eternity. Earthly cities and palaces cause him to remember thee, O thou holy city, heavenly Jerusalem, whose walls are salvation, and thy gates praise, and the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple in the midst of thee! — He who sees the world in this light, will draw it's sting, and disarm it of it's power to hurt; he will so use it, as not to abuse it, because the fashion of it passes away; he will so enjoy it, as to be always ready to leave it for a better; he will not think of settling at his inn*, because it is pleasantly situated. He remembers that he is a traveller; he forgets not that he is a stranger in the earth,

We are not, however, to expect, that

* See a beautiful passage, applicable in the Christian sense, Epiet. B. II. chap. xxiii. p. 212. CARTER.

we shall meet with nothing but pleasure DISC.
and entertainment, on the road of life. XII.

The traveller knows, he is to look for difficulties and dangers upon a journey, especially if it be a long one, and through an enemy's country. The ways may be rough, or deep; the weather stormy and tempestuous; robbers and murderers may attack him in the road, or wild beasts spring upon him from the forest; and the accommodations and provisions, from which he is to seek refreshment after his fatigue, may prove very ill qualified to afford it. Against all these incidents, possible and probable, the wise traveller is fore-armed with courage and patience, two qualities, without which, his expedition is likely to be very uncomfortable. And here he finds his chief support from the consideration, that all these inconveniences will have an end; that he is abroad, upon a journey; and that all he can suffer will be amply recompensed by the comforts and heart-felt joys he is to experience at home.

Let

DISC. Let the same mind be also in the Christian traveller, who is accomplishing his journey through this world to another.

XII.

Let him not think to find the path always smooth, or to tread continually upon roses. In a world like ours, there are more thorns than flowers. Often, in the concerns of life, will he find himself perplexed with doubts, and entangled in difficulties, through which he must make his way with toil, and not without pain. His passage will be obstructed by rocks of offence, at which, unless he tread with skill and caution, he will stumble, and fall. Frequently, therefore, will he have occasion to cry out, "O hold thou up my goings in thy paths, O Lord, that my footsteps slip not! Give thine angels charge over me, to keep me in all my ways!"

As the road will not always be safe beneath, so neither will the sun always shine upon him from above. Life is a day, and in a day there are many changes of weather.

weather. Youth is the morning, when the sky, perhaps, is clear and serene; every thing smiles upon our traveller, and invites him to proceed. But anon, all is overcast, and the heaven grows black with clouds and wind. The hour of prosperity is past, and the storms of adversity and affliction gather round his head. The rain descends, the lightnings flash, the thunder roars, and the Almighty seems to set his face against him. "Fearfulness and trembling come upon him, horror overwhelms him, and he says, O that I had wings like a dove! For then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander afar off, and remain in the wilderness. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest."

Nor is this the whole of his danger. There are those who lie in wait, at such dark seasons, to despoil him of all that is truly dear and valuable. Evil men and evil spirits endeavour to deprive him of his honour, his virtue, his integrity, his religion,

DISC. gion, his life—his eternal life. The trou-
XII. bles of the world, consuming cares, and
 envenomed passions, are in motion, like
 the wild beasts of the forest, howling and
 hissing at him from all quarters. Now he
 has need of all his courage and steadfastness,
 and it behoves him to march on resolutely,
 holding fast, in one hand, the shield of
 faith, in the other, the sword of the Spirit,
 which is the word of God; strengthening and
 comforting himself with those divine words
 of the Psalmist, in the xci^a Psalm—"Thou
 " shalt tread upon the lion and adder, the
 " young lion and the dragon shalt thou
 " trample under feet. Because he hath set
 " his love upon me, therefore will I deliver
 " him; I will set him on high, because he
 " hath known my name. He shall call
 " upon me, and I will answer him; I will
 " be with him in trouble, I will deliver him
 " and honour him. With long life will I
 " satisfy him, and shew him my salvation."

Such are the dangers and hardships to be
 encountered by the Christian traveller, who,
 considering

considering himself as such, and knowing, he can no otherwise attain to the end of his journey, encounters them accordingly, and at length overcomes them all, upon the principle thus laid down by St. Paul—

“ Our light affliction, which is but for a
“ moment, worketh for us a far more ex-
“ ceeding and eternal weight of glory;
“ while we look not at the things which
“ are seen, but at the things which are not
“ seen: for the things which are seen are
“ temporal; but the things which are not
“ seen are eternal. For we know, that if our
“ earthly house of this tabernacle were dis-
“ solved, we have a building of God, an
“ house not made with hands, eternal in
“ the heavens.”

DISC.
XII.

On the same principle, the Christian traveller, like all others, takes up with the accommodations he finds on the road, and learns to be “ content with such things as he hath.” No traveller was ever in greater straits than St. Paul. But hear what he says of himself—“ I have learned,
“ in

DISC. "in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be

XII.

"content. I know both how to be abased,
 "and I know how to abound; every where
 "and in all things I am instructed, both to
 "be full, and to be hungry, both to
 "abound, and to suffer need." Were we
 settled upon earth for ever, there would be
 some excuse for our being solicitous where
 we lived, what we ate, what we drank,
 and wherewithal we were clothed. But
 when we consider, in how very short a
 time it will be exactly the same thing,
 whether we dwelt in a palace, or a cottage;
 whether we sat down to two courses, or
 two dishes; whether our garments were
 made of silk, or of wool; whether we
 were waited on by twenty servants, or by
 one; it is not worth while to break the
 peace of our minds about such unef-
 fential circumstances. If God vouchsafe
 us a share of the good things of the world
 in our passage through it, let us enjoy them
 with thankfulness, and let us be charitable
 and kind to our fellow travellers, who are
 not so well provided for. If such good
 things

things are 'denied us, still let us be thankful for what we have. It is far better to want them, than to be wedded to them.

Let us not forget, that he who travels, as well as he who "contends for the mastery," must be "temperate in all things," if he would travel with ease and pleasure: and therefore, considering the difficulty of continuing so in the midst of plenty, it is happy for us, generally speaking, when temptations to be otherwise are not thrown in our way. "I beseech you," says St. Peter, "as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." We are strangers and pilgrims. We must up, and be moving on. The Lord of life, to shew that on earth he had no abiding city, was born at an inn; and there was no room for him, but in the stable. Such were the accommodations with which he was content. What he once said to his disciples, he says to all—"Arise, let us go hence."

But it is not enough, that the Christian traveller

DISC. traveller be content. Let him be cheerful,
XII. and beguile the tediousness of the way with
 a sacred song—"Awake up, my glory;
 "awake, lute and harp!—I will praise
 "thee, O Lord, among the people, I will
 "sing unto thee among the nations. For
 "thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and
 "thy truth unto the clouds. I will sing
 "unto the Lord as long as I live, I will
 "praise my God while I have my being.
 "And so shall my words please him; my
 "joy shall be in the Lord." This is the
 language of the very same person, who says,
 in the text, "I am a stranger in the earth."
 Thus it was, that he consoled himself under
 the fatigues of his journey, and rejoiced
 even in tribulation, because every step he
 set, however painful, brought him nearer
 to his eternal home. Consider the case of
 those two travellers, Paul and Silas, in the
 dungeon of a prison, at the dead of mid-
 night, with their feet fast in the stocks.
 And in this situation, how did they employ
 themselves? In groaning and lamenting?
 No; they "prayed and sang praises unto
 "God."

“God.” Let us hear no more of murmuring and complaining. In all things let us give thanks, and be able to say, with David, “Thy statutes have been my songs
“in the house of my pilgrimage.”

DISC.
XII.

It will greatly contribute towards relieving the sufferings and hardships of our journey, if we can have the company of some of like sentiments, tempers and dispositions, who are travelling the same way, with whom we may converse about the country to which we are all going, consult upon the best means of arriving safely at it, and mutually communicate our observations upon the objects that present themselves, and the incidents that happen upon the road. “They that fear thee,” says the Psalmist, “will be glad when they see me, “because I have hoped in thy word. I “am a companion of all them that fear “thee, and keep thy precepts.—We took “sweet counsel together, and walked in “the house of God as friends.” He who travels alone, will often find himself weary

DISC. and melancholy: he will often want help
XII.
and assistance. As the wise man observes,
“Two are better than one; for if they
“fall,” (and who can at any time be as-
sured he shall not?) “the one will help up
“his fellow.” Much does it concern us,
in making our connections, and choosing
our friends, to make and choose such, as
will forward us on our way, and continue
with us unto the end; and it is happy for
us, when they who stand in the nearest re-
lation to us, and with whom we must of
necessity spend the greatest part of our
time, are of this sort. Blessed are they,
who thus go through life together, in peace
and love, comforting and encouraging one
another, and talking of the things pertain-
ing to the kingdom of God. To these
heirs of salvation angels delight to mini-
ster; and that which happened to the two
disciples, upon the road to Emmaus, will
happen to them. “Jesus himself,” though
they do not know it, will “draw near, and
“go with them.”

With

With such companions, and such a DISC.
guide, our journey will seem short, because XII.
it will become pleasant; and there will be
nothing formidable even in the last and
worst part of it, death itself. In the his-
tory which the Scriptures give us of good
men in old time, it is worth observing, that
their dying appears to have been a circum-
stance as easy and indifferent to them as to
the historian who relates it. With Moses it
is only, Go up to mount Nebo, and die.
With Aaron, Ascend to mount Hor, and do
the same. And, before them, we find the
holy patriarchs, when the appointed hour
came, calling their children about them,
bequeathing to posterity the promised blef-
sing of salvation by Messiah; gathering up
their feet into the bed, and dying with the
same satisfaction and complacency as they
would have fallen asleep. And why? but
because, having been always accustomed to
think of themselves as strangers in the
earth, they constantly regarded death as a
departure to that other and better country,
of which they lived in perpetual expecta-
tion,

DISC. tion, and could not therefore be surprised
XII. or alarmed, at being called to take possession, as knowing, they began their journey, in order to finish it. Could we think as they did, we should live as they did, and die as they did. Nor should we grieve for the dead who have died in the Lord. They have only passed us upon the road, and are gone, as it were, to prepare for our reception. And surely, in the journey of life, as in other journeys, it is a pleasing reflection, that, whatever usage we may meet with abroad (and strangers do not often meet with the best), we have friends, who are thinking of us at home, and will receive us with joy, when our journey is at an end.—And lo, the heavens are opened, and the habitations of the blessed disclose themselves to view. The glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, the noble army of martyrs, all that have departed hence, from the beginning of the world, in the faith and fear of God, a great multitude which no man can number, are seen standing in white robes, with

with palms in their hands. They beckon DISC.
us away to those blissful regions, from XII.
whence sin and sorrow are for ever excluded, and into which they who are admitted "go no more out." All, once, like us, trod, with many a toilsome step, this valley of weeping; all once were "strangers in the earth." Now, they rest from their labours, and are entered into the joy of their Lord. They have accomplished happily their journey, and through faith and patience have inherited the promises—A seraph's voice, from the eternal throne, calls to every one of us—"Go, and do thou likewise."

DISCOURSE XIII.

THE FULNESS OF TIME.

GAL. IV. 4, 5.

When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

TH E words make part of the Epistle for the day. And none could have been chosen with greater propriety: none can more fully represent to us, in a short compass, the wonderful nature and blessed effects of the redemption, begun as at this season to be wrought for us. Highly fit it is, that our thoughts

D I S C.
XIII.

DISC. should still continue to be employed upon
XIII. it. The angels desire to look into it: we surely cannot yet be weary of meditating upon it. To refresh, to quicken, to fix, the impressions that may have been made, is the intention of the following discourse, in which some reflections shall be offered, on the several particulars of the text, exactly in the order in which they lie; for a better cannot be devised.

I. "When the fulness of time was come."—The same truth is here pointed out, which is taught us by the wise man, in the book of Ecclesiastes; "To every thing, and to every purpose under heaven, there is a time, and a season." Events do not come to pass, one at this time, and another at that, by mere chance. He, who created the world, regulates and disposes the things that are passing in it, appointing to each it's time. This time, all circumstances considered, is always the very best and fittest. It is impossible for *us* to consider all circumstances, or, perhaps,

haps, one thousandth part of them; and, DISC.
therefore, it is impossible for us to say, XIII.
which time is the best and fittest. The
great God only can do this. To the eye
of the divine mind (if we may so express
it) all events, with all their circumstances,
from the beginning to the end of the world,
present themselves at once, and stand ar-
ranged, by infinite wisdom, each in it's due
time and place. This all seeing and all di-
recting providence extends not only to the
rise and fall of empires, or the births and
deaths of great men, but to every the
smallest concern. The hairs of our heads
are numbered, and a sparrow falls not to
the ground unnoticed. In the Scriptures,
where the designs of God are opened, and
we are admitted, as it were, behind the
scenes, this is shewn in many instances.
In others, where his designs are kept secret
from us, we must learn to trust, and not
presumptuously determine, that this or that
event takes place at an *unseasonable* time,
or fancy that we could have ordered things
in a better manner.

What

DISC. What has been said must apply in the
XIII. strongest manner to the birth of Christ,
which being the most important event that
ever did happen, must needs have happened
at that very time which of all others was
most proper, by the apostle in the text
called "the fulness of time;" when all the
designs of God respecting it were ripe and
ready for accomplishment. A thinking man,
who sits down to consider the dispensations
going before from the beginning, with the
then state of the world, both Jew and
Gentile, may discover many reasons why
the time of Christ's appearance was the
proper time. Some have asked, why he
did not come sooner? And if the world
should last many ages longer, and his reli-
gion seem to be perishing, others may ask,
why he did not come later? All such
questions have no foundation, but in our
own ignorance. Could we see as God sees,
we should see that all was right: since we
cannot see, we must believe; because all
wise and all righteous is He, who has or-
dained it so to be as it is. I would wish
deeply

deeply to impress this general consideration on your minds, as one which alone will carry you safe through all doubts and difficulties, all dangers and distresses. Only love God, and serve him; and then, "all things" cannot but "work together," under his direction, "for good" to you, in the end.

DISC.

XIII.

II. "When the fulness of time" — that time judged to be, on all accounts, the fittest — "was come, God sent forth his Son." He had a Son therefore to send forth; that Son of whom it is said, that he was in the bosom of the Father; that he had glory with the Father before the world was; that Son, by the beloved disciple, St. John, styled, "THE WORD who was in the beginning with God, and who was God; by whom all things were made, and without whom was not any thing made that was made;" that Son, who came down from heaven; who "came from the Father, and returned to him;" that Son, who says, "I and the Father are one;

DISC. "one ; I am in the Father, and the Fa-
XIII. "ther in me ; he that hath seen me, hath
"seen the Father." These passages shew
you as clearly as language can shew, that
the Saviour born, as at this season, though
born as a man, was in reality more than
man ; a divine person, who had being in
heaven before the world began ; who for
us men, and for our salvation, came down
from heaven ; whose title is, the SON, or
the WORD OF GOD. That these two titles
belong to one and the same person, will be
evident to you from a wonderful description
in the xixth chapter of St. John's Revela-
tion, which I cannot forbear reciting. "I saw
"heaven opened, and behold a white horse ;
"and he that sat upon him was called,
"Faithful and True ; and in righteousness
"he doth judge and make war. His eyes
"were as a flame of fire, and on his head
"were many crowns ; and he had a name
"written, that no man knew, but he him-
"self ; and he was clothed with a vesture
"dipped in blood ; and his name is called,
"THE WORD OF GOD. And he hath on his
"vesture

“vesture and on his thigh a name written, DISC.
“KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” XIII.

The being here described is certainly a *person*; and that person can be no other than our ever blessed Redeemer, going forth to judge and take vengeance on his enemies. He is styled, the WORD OF GOD, and must be the same WORD mentioned in the beginning of St. John's Gospel, who “was in the beginning with God, and was God.” These things none can, with any shew of reason, gainsay. Proceed we therefore,

III. To reflect upon the next particular, that this divine person became man—“God sent forth his Son, made of a woman.” And if the Son, thus sent forth, were indeed no more than a mere man, why should it be said, “made of a woman;” since every man is made of a woman, and, in the nature of things, can have no other original? There is nothing extraordinary in the circumstance; and in speaking of a mere man, it could never have been mentioned.

But

DISC. But the fact is, that the divine person,
XIII. above described, appeared in our nature,
 and was "made of a woman." Herein is
 the wonder of love, the root and fountain
 of our salvation, pointed out by the Apost-
 le, and expressed or implied in so many
 other passages of Scripture; such as these
 which follow — "The Word being incar-
 " nate, that is, made, or becoming flesh;
 " the Son of God being sent in the likeness
 " of sinful flesh; partaking of flesh and
 " blood; his taking the form of a servant;
 " being made in the likeness of men; being
 " found in fashion as a man; assuming the
 " seed of Abraham; his descending from
 " heaven; coming forth from the Father;
 " being sent, and coming into the world;
 " the day-spring from on high visiting us;
 " eternal life being manifested." In the
 name of common sense, if our Saviour be
 in reality no more than a mere man, like
 other men, what can all these expressions
 signify? They must have been used (as one
 should be tempted to think) only to deceive
 and mislead mankind in that point, which
 of

of all others is the most important. No—DISC.
surely, the result of all taken together, is, XIII.
and can be, no other than this—There was
a blessed and glorious person, who from all
eternity did subsist in the form of God,
being the Son of God, one in nature with
his Father, the express image, or apt cha-
racter of his substance; by a temporal gene-
ration, he truly became man, taking hu-
man nature into an union with the divine;
made “like unto us in all things,” (as the
Apostle saith) “sin only excepted.” He
had a body, like ours, which was nourish-
ed, and did grow; which needed and received
sustenance; which was tender and sensible,
frail, and subject to suffering; which was
bruised with stripes, torn with scourges,
pricked with thorns, pierced with nails,
transfixed with a spear; which was mortal,
and underwent death, as our mortal bodies
do, when the breath goes out of them.

He had also a soul endued with the same
faculties as ours. His understanding was
capable of learning and improvement; for,

DISC. as man, he was ignorant of some things,
XIII. which he might know; and "he grew," it
 is said, "in *wisdom*, as well as stature." His will was subject and submissive to the divine will. "Let this cup, if it be possible, pass from me; nevertheless, not my will but thine be done." He had the several appetites of meat, of drink, of sleep and rest; for we read, that he was hungry, that he thirsted, that he was weary. He had the various human passions and affections — such as were natural and unblameable — and these of the most troublesome and afflictive sort; such as zeal, pity, sorrow. Upon occasion of his friend Lazarus's death, he groaned in spirit and was troubled; he then, and upon other occasions, did weep; and you all know what excesses of sorrow, what anxieties and agonies, what tribulations, disturbances and amazements, the Evangelists describe him to have undergone at his passion.

These particulars place it beyond all doubt, that he was perfect man, as the passages

passages before cited shew that he was perfect God; perfect God, and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting. His human nature was the true tabernacle, or tent, which the Apostle mentions, of a more perfect building than that of old; the Divinity was the GLORY, which, descending from heaven, filled it, took possession of it, and dwelled in it. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us — God sent forth his Son, "made of a woman."

DISC.
XIII.

And why should this be thought a thing incredible? If "the reasonable soul, and "flesh," the former a spiritual, the latter a material substance, be so united, and that in a manner by us utterly unknown and inconceivable, as to compose "one man;" why should we deny the possibility of such an union between God and man, as to render them "one Christ?" Does reason pro-

* Q. the objection, that the cases are not parallel, since in the former there are not two *conscious* beings united; and that God and the creature should have *one* and the *same*

DISC. test against it? Nay, verily, but she bears
 XIII. a powerful testimony to it. The expectation of such a *divine* Saviour was from the beginning; the notion went out into all the earth. That God should, in some extraordinary manner, visit and dwell with man, is an idea, which, as we read the writings of the ancient heathens, meets us in a thousand different forms. It is the voice of nature, sickening, languishing, and at her last gasp, under a load of sin and sorrow, from which none less than God could deliver her; and crying out, from age to age, with the dying patriarch—"I have waited
 " for thy salvation, O LORD!—Lord, in
 " thee, in thee alone have I trusted; let
 " me never be confounded."

Such, then, is the Saviour, whose birth at Bethlehem we this day celebrate. "God
 " so loved the world, that he gave his only
 " begotten Son;" and what love must any person bear to the world, who could do

consciousness, is not conceivable.—See DODDRIDGE'S Lectures, p. 394.

this

this for it? The Son abased himself, that we might be exalted. The Son became a subject, that the subjects — and those subjects in rebellion — might become sons; “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.” And what more could have been done by a Son?

DISC.
XIII.

The Saviour was God, that he might save us by his Almighty power; that he might remove the most stubborn difficulties in the way to our salvation; that he might subdue our enemies, command nature, abolish death, and vanquish hell; that he might satisfy justice, conciliate and appease, by dignity of person, value of merit, nearness and dearness to the Father; that on his doctrine, his example, and his laws, might be stamped the character of Divinity, denominating them the coin of heaven, the royal image and superscription, which it is treason to efface.

The Saviour was man, that as man lost the divine favour, man might regain it;

DISC. that "as by one man's disobedience many
XIII. "were made sinners, so by the obedience
 "of one many might be made righteous;"
 "that as man did approve, so man might
 "condemn, sin in the flesh;" that "as by
 "man came death, by man might come
 "also the resurrection of the dead; as in
 "the first Adam all die, even so in Christ,
 "the second Adam, (who was likewise "the
 "Lord from heaven") may all be made
 "alive;" that through sympathy, compas-
 sion, a fellow-feeling of our infirmities, he
 might propitiate for our faults, intercede for
 our welfare, pity and aid us in our distresses;
 be tender of our good, sensible of our neces-
 sities: "in all things it behoved him to be
 "made like unto his brethren; that he
 "might be a merciful and faithful High
 "Priest, in things pertaining to God, to
 "make reconciliation for the sins of the
 "people; for in that he himself hath suf-
 "fered, being tempted, he is able to suc-
 "cour them that are tempted." In a hu-
 man form he became visible, audible, fami-
 liar; less amazing and more obliging. He
 became

became a copy for us in behaving, in moderating our appetites, in governing our passions, in employing the powers of soul and body, in passing through all conditions, and accommodating ourselves to all events. So lively a pattern, with such power, and to such effect, could never otherwise have been exhibited. O what a comfort it is to think, we shall be judged by such a person ! And with what propriety was he appointed to recapitulate (as the Apostle has it) and reconcile all things in heaven and earth, thus allied as he was to both parties ; Son of God, brother to us ; that so he might dispense God's grace, and purchase our peace !—" Lord, to whom " else, then, shall we go ? Thou hast" — thou only canst have—" the words of eternal life."

DISC.
XIII.

because a copy for us is delivered in no-
tation our appointment, and we are
in the midst of the service of God
and hope in waiting through all
years, and accommodation service to all
events, to have a partner with such power
and to each effect, could never obtain
we have been exhibited. O what a con-
fession it is to think we shall be judged by
such a person! And with what propriety
was he appointed to investigate the
specific part of it, and especially things in
heaven and earth, that shall be as he was to
be his partner; Son of God, brother to us,
that in the right divine God's grace, and
purchase our pardon, "Lord, to whom
shall I then, shall we go? Thou hast
that only canst save—" the words of our
"and life."

DISCOURSE XIV.

THE EXISTENCE AND EMPLOYMENT OF THE HOLY ANGELS.

R E V. VII. 11.

All the angels stood round about the throne.

AMONG the festivals of our church, DISC.
XIV.
we find one celebrated at this season
of the year, in honour of the holy angels.
To justify such her appointment, and point
out to you the many advantages to be ob-
tained from it, is the design of the follow-
ing discourse; in which some thoughts shall
be offered, on the existence of angels, their
nature and condition; the perfect obedience

DISC. paid by them to God ; and the kind ser-
XIV. vices rendered to man.

And, first, respecting the existence of angels.

It is needless to trouble you with the opinions of the heathen concerning beings of this kind ; because they could utter nothing but what was either merely conjectural, or else derived to them by tradition from an original Revelation. We have better guides : we can go to the fountain head. Conjecture is useless, where certainty can be had ; and tradition of no account, when the Revelation itself is before us.

Nor doth it seem at all necessary, by a long series of texts, to demonstrate, that there are such beings as angels. They who have ever looked into the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, can have no doubt upon this head. The fact is clear :

our

our business shall be to convince you, that DISC.
it is interesting. XIV.

For it may be said, perhaps, To what purpose discourse to us concerning the inhabitants of a world future, remote, and of which our ideas are very confused, and indeterminate? Let us rather attend to the world in which we live, and to them that dwell therein.

It would be perfectly right so to do, if the world in which we live were the only one with which we were connected, and death the final period of our existence. But no one person, I dare say, who now hears me, seriously imagines this to be the case. And if there be another world which is to receive us for ever, after our departure hence, the existence of it's inhabitants, with whom we are to spend an eternity, becomes a speculation both pleasing and important. This state of our being, you say, is future. It is so, to-day; but before to-morrow, it may be present to some; a very few years
must

DISC. must render it present to all. In a moment,
XIV. in the twinkling of an eye, the change is effected: every connection with this world is dissolved, and we become at once citizens of another, and members of a society altogether new. You say it is remote. That by no means appears. It may not be "far" "from every one of us." A man who had lived always in the darkness of a prison, and only heard of the world which we now enjoy, might fancy, from all which his own experience taught him, that it must needs be remote; whereas, nothing more would be requisite to convince him of his mistake, than to open the doors of his prison-house, and lead him forth to liberty and the sun. Could a child, in it's mother's womb, be made sensible it was to be born into a new world, it might entertain the same prejudice respecting the supposed distance; but when the appointed time for it's birth came, a single instant would shew, that it was *only* a prejudice. The spiritual and eternal world, into which we are, at a destined hour, to be born, may be, like it's
divine

divine maker and king, near us, and round about us, in a manner of which we are not aware, nor shall be, till we enter it; till we burst the intervening shell, and all the glories of the invisible system present themselves to view.

DISC.
XIV.

But our ideas of this future world are confused and indeterminate. Not more so than those conceived by the man in prison, or the child in the womb, could it conceive any, of the present world, in which we live: not more so, than the ideas formed of things not seen, by comparison with things seen. We have the divine assurance of God's Word, that such a world exists; and the pictures there drawn of it, if we considered them as we ought to do, must make us impatient to behold the original.

But the truth is, that whatever ideas of a future and invisible world may be, at certain times, impressed upon our minds, they are presently effaced by a tide of business, or pleasure, and stand therefore in need of being

DISC. being continually refreshed and renewed.
XIV.

Now, what can do this so effectually, as frequent meditations on the blessed inhabitants of that world, the holy angels? We love to recollect a place, by the circumstance of those friends we have in it. By thinking of them, we are led to think of the place where they are, and learn to love and desire it the more. An intercourse is by this means opened, a correspondence established, between heaven and earth.

And here, give me leave to ask, whether we are not often guilty of neglecting and forgetting, in a manner unkind, at least, our friends who are gone before us to a better country? When once they are departed, we suffer the remembrance of them soon to slip from our minds, as if we thought they ceased any longer to exist. To pray for the dead, seems needless and absurd, unless we supposed their condition in another life still undetermined, and that they were undergoing pains, from which our prayers might contribute to release them.

them. But to commemorate the day of DISC.
their departure; to think of them, and XIV.
their situation; to recollect their virtues;
and express our wishes of seeing, and being
with them again, in God's good time—this
surely would be an exercise equally pious
and profitable, and to which no good pro-
testant can have any reasonable objection.
The spirits of the just, when gone hence,
are with the angels; we should think of
them together, invigorating at once our
faith, our hope, and our charity. Thus
much for the instruction and consolation to
be derived from the Scripture doctrine of
the existence of angels. Still more will be
derived, from a consideration,

Secondly, of what is revealed concerning
their nature and condition. Shut up in this
world of matter, we might be apt to ima-
gine, there are no creatures of a nature and
condition different from our own. But we
are informed, upon the best authority, that
there are creatures of a very different na-
ture and condition. Angels are spirits.
Not

DISC. Not formed of the same gross materials,
XIV. they are free from the inconveniences we feel, the temptations and sufferings to which we are subject. Their appearance is glorious as the light of heaven, and their motion, like that, rapid, and, as it were, instantaneous. Pure and active as the most pure and active elements with which we are acquainted, light and fire; strangers equally to sin and sorrow; they live evermore in the presence of God, and enjoy all the felicity, which that presence can bestow; expressing continually their sense of such felicity, in hymns of praise, before the throne. This is the sum and substance of the many descriptions to be met with in sacred writ.

The contemplation of so many excellent and happy beings opens our understandings, and enlarges our conceptions of the Creator's power and goodness.

But if we ourselves are miserable, what benefit, it will be asked, can result to us
 from

from contemplating the happiness of others? DISC.
XIV.
Will not our misery be rather aggravated than alleviated by it? We do not cease to be wretched upon earth, because the angels are otherwise in heaven.

Redeemed by the Son of God, leave off, O man, to complain. Wait but for a little while in faith and patience, and their happiness shall be yours. The Redeemer himself has said (and shall he not perform it?) that, at the resurrection, we shall become "like the angels of God." Is not the case then greatly altered? Is there no pleasure in contemplating a felicity, the model after which our own will be formed and fashioned? Surely it is the very consideration, which, above all others, should cause us to forget our uneasiness, and remember our misery no more. Angels are glorious and happy beings, and we shall be so too! They are glorious, because they are pure; and we must be therefore pure, in order to be glorious. The misery complained of is the furnace, in which we are to
be

DISC. be made pure, that dust and ashes may be
XIV. changed into transparent glass. "Purge
 "away the dross," (says the wise man)
 "and a vessel shall come forth for the fi-
 "ner." Our evil tempers and affections
 are that dross. With them we cannot enter
 into the kingdom of God; nor should find
 any happiness there, if we could enter.
 They must be separated, and left behind.
 Severe trials, very severe trials, are often
 necessary to separate them, and are sent for
 that purpose. When the metal is stubborn,
 coals of fire, for the most salutary purpose,
 are heaped upon it's head. The Son of
 God is with his faithful servants in the fur-
 nace, and will bring them safely out;
 when, transformed to angels, they shall
 sing the song of the redeemed; "It is
 "good for us, that we have been afflicted."

From the nature and condition of angels,
 let us advert,

Thirdly, to that perfect service, that
 ready and unlimited obedience, by them
 paid

paid to their Almighty Creator. Their felicity does not consist in freedom and independence. An attempt was once made by some of them to attain it. "There was war even in heaven," on that account: but Michael prevailed, and the dragon was cast out. The angels that fell, fell by rebellion; they who kept their station, kept it by obedience, and are thus addressed by the Psalmist: "Ye angels of his, ye that excel in strength, ye that fulfil his commandment, hearkening to the voice of his words." Like the lightnings, which say, "Here we are," they are represented as waiting before the throne, ready, at the divine command, to fly to the extremities of the world. Instead of using seditious language against their sovereign, we find Michael the archangel, "not bringing a railing accusation" against the great adversary himself, but mildly saying, "The Lord rebuke thee!" — A circumstance much to be regarded by all who have the misfortune to be engaged in disputes. Nor are the angels more exact in loyalty to their

DISC.
XIV.

DISC. king, than in preserving due subordination
 XIV. in their several ranks, and under their respective leaders; without which, peace could not be in heaven, any more than on earth. This was the reflection of our judicious and admirable Hooker, when a friend asked him, just before his death, on what subject his thoughts might, at that time, be employed. The subject which engaged his dying thoughts, ought constantly to engage our living ones; since, in the prayer composed and delivered out to his disciples by our Lord and Saviour, the obedience of the angels is proposed as the pattern to be imitated by us; as the copy after which we should diligently write: "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." Were this once the case, then would "the heavens rejoice, and the earth be glad." The will of God would be sought, in order to be found; and found, in order to be executed. We do not indeed stand in the immediate presence, or receive our orders at once from the throne: but the Scriptures convey them, and, by his gracious Spirit, "God
 " is

“ is in the midst of us :” we likewise may DISC.
“ fulfil his commandment, by hearkening XIV.
“ to the voice of his word.” Had we but
a due respect to the example set us by the
angels, we should not be so careless, as we
are, about knowing what the will of the
Lord is ; much less should we be averse
from knowing it, because averse from doing
it. Angels are ever on the watch ; eager to
do it, and therefore eager to know it. We
should not presume to determine which
precepts we may observe, and which we
may neglect : the obedience of an angel is
universal. We should not put off our duty
from day to day : the obedience of an angel
is prompt and ready. We should perform
it, not as a task, but as a pleasure : the
obedience of an angel is hearty and fervent :
it is his delight, because he loves God : it
would be ours, if we loved God, in the
same degree. To love, no commandments
are grievous. The difficulties remain as
they were ; but the motive overcomes
them with ease. The contest, at first,
among angelic spirits in heaven, and since,

DISC.
XIV. among the children of Adam, through all their successive generations, upon earth, has been, in reality, a contest between pride and love. The success and termination of it may direct us where to choose our party. Pride, as displayed in the rebellion of Lucifer, threw angels from the height of heaven, into the bottomless pit : love, as manifested in the obedience of Christ, exalted man, from the dust, to the thrones of angels, in heaven. This leads us to consider,

Lastly, the benevolence and charity of the holy angels ; the love they have always shewn for man, and the services by them rendered to him.

And here a scene opens, worthy of all admiration, gratitude, and praise. For never do those blessed spirits obey with greater delight the commands of their Maker, than when mankind is the subject of those commands ; so deeply, from the beginning, have they interested themselves in our welfare.

When

When the world was created, and man put in possession of it, these “morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy.” Angels accompanied those servants of the most High, the ancient patriarchs, during the course of their pilgrimage. By angels was the law given on Sinai; by them were the armies of Israel directed, on their march through the wilderness, protected after their establishment in Canaan, and their enemies discomfited. By them was the Saviour proclaimed, on the night in which he was born; comforted, after his temptation; strengthened, in his passion; testified of, at his resurrection; attended, at his ascension. They shall again attend him, on his return to judgment, gather together his elect from the four winds, and celebrate his final triumph over our last enemy. “Even now there is joy among them over one sinner that repenteth;” and the Apostle says concerning them, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them that shall be heirs of salvation?”

DISC. Lord, what is man, that thou art thus
XIV. mindful of him, and causest him to be
visited by celestial spirits? But, in the
person of Christ, one far above all created
spirits did not disdain to visit him; and the
court of heaven is only attendant on its
king; "Wherefore, when he bringeth his
"first begotten into the world, he saith,
"And let all the angels of God worship
"him."

But—"Are these things indeed so?" Do
the holy angels take a decided part in our
concerns? Let us, at length, take a part
in them, ourselves, and not continue wholly
indifferent, as to what we have been, what
we are, and what we shall be: some little
time, surely, should be spent in the enquiry.
Spirits above are active to save us; spirits
below are active to destroy us; and we
sleep, not to be awakened, perhaps, till it
is too late.

At the creation of the world, did "the
"morning stars sing together, and all the
"sons

“sons of God shout for joy?” And do DISC.
men forget to be thankful for it? In a fit XIV.
of spleen, do they say, they have no reason
to be thankful for it? In a fit of infidelity,
do they deny both the creation, and the
Creator? Such men, alas, there are: shame
on them — equal shame on those who have
no more sense than to admire and encourage
them. “Praise the Lord, all ye works of
“his, in all places of his dominion; and,
“all ye sons of men, for whom those works
“were wrought: praise the Lord, O my
“soul; and all that is within me praise his
“holy name.”

It is written, “When he bringeth his
“first begotten into the world, he saith,
“And let all the angels of God worship
“him:” and have we lived to hear persons,
calling themselves Christians, with Bibles in
their hands, telling us, they find themselves
obliged in conscience to quit the church,
because she is guilty of idolatry in now
doing — what she always has done — in
paying divine honours to her Lord and Sa-

DISC. viour?—Such men likewise there are; and
 XIV. they too have their admirers and followers.
 The more is the pity! But marvel not:
 “it is the last time.”

To conclude—Are angels, “ministering
 “spirits, sent forth to minister to them that
 “shall be heirs of salvation;” rejoicing
 when we do well, and, consequently, griev-
 ing when we do otherwise? Have they
 been, in effect, under every dispensation,
 the *guardians* of the people of God? Let
 us duly reverence and respect them, as
 such. When we consider them as “en-
 “camping round about us, to deliver us,”
 let us no longer fear the power of the ene-
 my; since “they that are with us are more
 “than they that are with them.” When
 we reflect, that they are witnesses of our
 actions, let us do nothing that may make
 us ashamed before them; nothing, but
 what we would do, if we saw them.
 When we remember that they are to give
 an account of us, upon their return to him
 who sent them, let us take care that they
 may

may give it with joy, and not with grief. DISC.
XIV.
Let not our conduct be such, as shall oblige
them to quit their charge, before the time.

O terrible voice, that once heard, at midnight, in the temple at Jerusalem, foreboding it's destruction, then near at hand—

LET US GO HENCE! “Whoſo defileth
“the temple of God, him ſhall God de-
“ſtroy.” Our bodies are ſuch temples.

May no unlawful deſires, no irregular paſ-
ſions, ever ſo deſecrate them, as that con-
ſcience ſhall ring in our ears the ſame dread-
ful ſound; but may our heavenly friends and
guardians continue with us to the end, to
comfort us in our laſt ſorrows, and ſupport
us in our expiring agonies; that, when
breath ſhall forſake the body, the ſoul may
be “carried by angels into Abraham’s
“boſom.”

may give it with joy, and not with grief, and
let not our conduct be such, as shall oblige
them to quit their charge, before the time.
O terrible voice, that once heard, at midnight,
in the temple at Jerusalem, fore-
boding destruction, when near at hand—
"Who is desolate?"—Whose desolation
"the temple of God, shall I call?"—
"they?" Our bodies and their temples
May no unshrunk fibres, no integral parts
None, ever to detract them, as that some
science shall ring in our ears the same dread-
ful sound; but may our heavenly friends and
guardians continue with us to the end, to
comfort us in our last sorrows, and support
us in our expiring agonies; that when
death shall strike the body, the soul may
be carried by angels into Abraham's
bosom, there to enjoy the bliss of the
righteous, and to wait for the resurrection
of the dead, and the life of the world to
come, and the glory of the Father, who
is the Father of the Father, and the Son
of the Son, and the Holy Spirit of the
Holy Spirit, Amen.

DISCOURSE XV.

THE PRESENCE OF GOD IN HOLY PLACES.

1 KINGS VIII. 27.

Will God indeed dwell on the earth?

THE occasion of this numerous and DISC.
XV.
solemn assembly calls upon us to consider well this question — a most awful and important question, and one which seems to have almost overwhelmed the vast and capacious mind of Solomon himself. “Will God indeed dwell on the earth? “Behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?”
Certainly

DISC. Certainly — That which is without bounds
XV. cannot be comprehended within that which
 has bounds, whether large or small; and
 therefore, in a strict and proper sense, “the
 “most High”—as St. Stephen, alluding to
 this very passage, asserts in the viith chapter
 of the Acts—“the most High dwelleth
 “not in temples made with hands.” But
 it is no less certain, that there is a sense,
 agreeably to which it may be truly said,
 that the most High *does* dwell in tem-
 ples made with hands. For this same king
 Solomon, in this same prayer at the dedica-
 tion of the temple, has the following words:
 — “Jehovah said, that he would dwell in
 “the thick darkness. I have surely built
 “thee an house to dwell in, a settled place
 “for thee to abide in for ever;” that is,
 during the old dispensation. And in one of
 the psalms, God himself is introduced as
 saying — “Jehovah hath chosen Sion; he
 “hath desired it for his habitation. This
 “is my rest for ever; here will I dwell,
 “for I have desired it.” Accordingly, we
 read, that “when the priests were come out
 “of

“ of the holy place, the cloud filled the Disc.
“ house of Jehovah, so that the priests xv.
“ could not stand to minister, because of the
“ cloud; for the glory of Jehovah had filled
“ the house of Jehovah.” The master took
possession of his house, and for a time displaced even his own servants, to shew that he did so. As if he had said, “ The house
“ which you have designed for my worship,
“ I have designed for your blessing; what
“ you have dedicated, I have accepted;
“ what you have consecrated, I have hallowed;
“ I have taken it for the purpose
“ you intended.” Or, to use the far more
emphatical words of the sacred penman—
“ I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication
“ that thou hast made before me; I
“ have hallowed this house which thou hast
“ built to put my name there for ever, and
“ mine eyes and mine heart shall be there
“ perpetually.”

Thus, notwithstanding the iniquities of mankind, and his own purity, as well as incomprehensible majesty, has God been
pleased

DISC. pleased to dwell indeed on earth, and to
XV.
vouchsafe an especial manifestation of his
presence in holy places dedicated to his
Name, and set apart for his worship. An
house designed for that end is therefore
styled *the house of God*, or place of his re-
sidence. The custom of consecrating such
places has prevailed in all ages, and through-
out all nations. It obtained among the wor-
shippers of false gods; but they derived it,
with many other religious rites and institu-
tions, from the worshippers of the true
God, among whom we find it in the
earliest times. It may be neither unenter-
taining nor uninstruative to trace, in few
words, the history of these holy places,
as it stands recorded in the Scriptures of
truth.

And here, it deserves well to be considered,
that, before houses were built, even in Pa-
radise itself, which seems to have been
throughout what may be called *holy ground*,
God had yet a distinct place, a *holy of holies*,
where in some peculiar manner he was
wont.

wont to dwell. For our first parents, we DISC.
 are told, when they had offended, "hid XV.
 "themselves from *the presence of the Lord;*"
 an expression used afterward to denote that
 manifestation of himself which God was
 pleased to make in his temple.

When Cain and Abel offered sacrifice, it
 was probably by divine appointment, and
 at a place, as well as a time, fixed upon
 for that purpose. It was offered, as we
 may reasonably suppose, before God, or to
the presence of Jehovah, from whence, it is
 likely, descended the sacred fire, as it did
 under the law, to consume the sacrifice of
 Abel, and thereby testify it's acceptance.
 The offering was burnt, that the offerer
 might be saved. The surety suffered, that
 the sinner might go free.

The patriarchs, we know, during their
 travels, wherever they came, built altars
 with their inclosures, and there "called
 "on the name of Jehovah;" that *Name*,
 of which God said, when the temple was
 built,

DISC. built, that he had "placed his Name
 XV. "there."

On the spot where Jacob was favoured with his prophetic dream or vision, where he saw the communication opened between earth and heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the mystic ladder, as in the fulness of time they were to be seen ascending and descending upon the Son of man,—on this hallowed spot he laid the first rudiments of a temple; he called the name of the place Bethel, that is, the house of God; for surely, said he, this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven! He set up a stone for a pillar, and poured oil on the top of it, adding, "it shall be God's house, and of
 "all that thou shalt give me, I will give
 "the tenth unto thee." Here, then, you have not only a *church*, but a church *endowed*.

"When Israel came out of Egypt, and
 "the house of Jacob from among the
 "strange

"strange people," they sojourned in the wilderness, travelling toward the land of promise. Their God and Saviour did not disdain to sojourn, and travel with them. As they dwelt in tents, he was pleased to do the same. In conformity to his own express direction, as to the framing every part of it, within and without, a sacred tabernacle was constructed and furnished in a proper manner to receive the divine guest. Thus the tabernacle of God was with men, and Moses there conversed with his Maker, as a man converses with his friend. From the mountains of Moab, Balaam viewed the camp of the chosen people, disposed in exact and beauteous order; he beheld them abiding in their tents, according to their tribes, with the cloud resting upon the holy tabernacle in the midst of them. What wonder, that under the guidance of the Spirit of God, which came upon him, his thoughts should be carried back to the blissful bowers of Eden, and forward to the coming of the blessed person, who should restore them to the world?—"How

DISC. "goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy
 xv. "tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are
 "they spread forth, as gardens by the river's
 "side; as the trees of lign-aloes, which Je-
 "hovah hath planted, and as cedar-trees be-
 "side the waters.—I shall see him, but not
 "now; I shall behold him, but not nigh;
 "there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and
 "a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel.—The
 "Lord his God is with him, and the shout
 "of a king is among them.—How shall
 "I curse whom God hath not cursed? Or
 "how shall I defy whom the Lord hath
 "not defied?—Surely, there is no enchant-
 "ment against Jacob, neither is there any
 "divination against Israel."

As God vouchsafed to travel with his people in the tabernacle of Moses, so did it please him to rest with them in the temple of Solomon. The feast of the dedication of that temple afforded the most magnificent sight that was ever presented to the eyes of mortals. Imagine to yourselves a building, where scarce any thing appeared less

less valuable than silver and gold; a building, of which God himself condescended to be the architect, and which had therefore in the design and execution all the perfection that infinite wisdom could give it. Before this building think you see the nation of the Israelites assembled, encircling their king, seated upon an exalted throne of burnished brass, with all the ensigns of majesty and royalty; while, amidst the harmony of different kinds of instruments, with the acclamations of a whole people, joining in a grand chorus of praise and thanksgiving, the glory of Jehovah, or a body of light above the brightness of the sun, descends from heaven, and fills the temple! Imagination can hardly reach the amazing idea. But thus is the scene described by the sacred writer. “And it came
“to pass, when the priests were come out
“of the holy place: (for all the priests that
“were present were sanctified, and did not
“then wait by course: also the Levites
“which were the singers, all of them being

DISC. "arrayed in white linen, having cymbals,
XV. "and psalteries, and harps, stood at the east
"end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with
"trumpets) it came even to pass, as the
"trumpeters and singers were as one, to
"make one sound to be heard in praising
"and thanking Jehovah; and when they
"lifted up their voice, with the trumpets,
"and cymbals, and instruments of music,
"and praised the Lord, saying, For he is
"good, for his mercy endureth for ever;
"that then the house was filled with a
"cloud, even the house of the Lord; so
"that the priests could not stand to minister, by reason of the cloud; for the
"glory of Jehovah filled the house of God.
"And when all the children of Israel saw
"how the fire came down, and the glory
"of Jehovah upon the house, they bowed
"themselves, with their faces to the ground,
"upon the pavement, and worshipped, and
"praised the Lord, saying, For he is good,
"for his mercy endureth for ever!" —

Never,

Never, after this, let us entertain low notions of God, or of the House where his glory dwelleth.

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And is he then, think you, less present with us, than he was with Israel? Is the Christian church less favoured than the Jewish church was? Have we lost any thing by the incarnation of his Son? Surely not. Let us consider a little. When man had offended his Maker, "Will God indeed dwell on earth?" was a question, which might well pose the deepest understanding. Some means must first be devised to reconcile him to the offender. Such means were devised; he himself had already devised them. God and man were to be united in Messiah, who should do away sin by the sacrifice of himself. This being foredetermined in the divine counsels, the communication between heaven and earth was restored, immediately after the fall, upon the strength of it: and if you ask, why God visited the sinful race of Adam, and took up his abode in a tabernacle,

DISC. cle, and a temple, the proper answer is,
 xv. He did it, because that, in the fulness of
 time, the "Word was to be made flesh, and
 " men were to behold his glory, the glory
 " as of the only begotten of the Father,
 " full of grace and truth." To that great
 event the divine appearances in old time
 looked forward. Accordingly, in the New
 Testament, we find the body of Christ
 styled " the *true* tabernacle, which the
 " Lord pitched, and not man : " and when
 the Jews were discoursing with our Lord
 concerning the then temple, and the time
 employed in building it, he made answer,
 alluding, and probably pointing, to his own
 body, " Destroy THIS temple, and in three
 " days I will raise it again." — Such being
 the reason of the connection re-established
 between God and sinful men, and of his
 dwelling among them, can we possibly
 doubt of his dwelling in Christian churches,
 that have been consecrated to his service,
 ever since the planting that religion in the
 world, when Christians had liberty and
 ability to erect such churches ? It may be
 said,

said; we do not see him, as the Israelites disc.
 did. But the *glory*, or body of *light*, or xv.
fire, which the Israelites saw, was only a
sign or *token* of his presence. "God is a
 "Spirit, whom no man hath seen, or can
 "see." We do not see the souls of those
 who are now assembled to worship him;
 yet are they present. The holy angels may
 be present at this time, and God himself,
 we trust, is so by his Spirit. You know
 who has said, "where two or three are ga-
 "thered together in my name, there am I
 "in the midst of them."

You will be pleased to favour me with
 your attention, while I press upon your
 minds two consequences which follow from
 this doctrine of the divine presence in holy
 places, viz. the mercies of God to man,
 and the duties of man to God.

The king makes the court. Wherever
 the king of glory comes, all heaven comes
 in his train: when he descendeth from on
 high, as when he ascended thither, "he

DISC. "giveth gifts unto men;" the blessings of
xv. eternity are showered around: "he open-
"eth his hand, and filleth all things living
"with plenteousness." In his dedication
prayer, king Solomon, personating, as it
should seem, the great Mediator, states
before God the various wants and miseries of
his people, requesting that to those who
should pray *in* or *towards* that temple,
they might be supplied and relieved; "that
"thine eyes may be open towards this
"house night and day; and hearken thou
"to the supplication of thy servant, and of
"thy people Israel, when they shall pray to-
"wards this place: and hear thou in hea-
"ven thy dwelling-place, and when thou
"hearest, forgive." Pardon for time past,
and grace for time to come, comprehend,
between them, the spiritual necessities of
mankind, and both are supposed to have
been justly and beautifully represented by
the service and the furniture of the taber-
nacle and temple of old; the former by the
acceptance of sacrifice, and the sprinkling
of blood, without which there is no remis-
sion ;

sion; the latter by the table of shew bread, DISC.
the golden candlestick with it's lamps, and XV.
the altar of incense, denoting the support
of our spirits by the true Bread which
cometh down from heaven, the instruction
of our minds by the light of truth shining
forth in the word of God, and the merits of
a Redeemer ascending with the prayers of
the faithful, to render them acceptable at
the eternal throne. Under the new law, in
like manner, at the baptismal Font, and at
the holy Table, are exhibited and communi-
cated the Spirit purifying and cleansing from
sin, the body and blood of Christ strength-
ening and refreshing the souls of men.
Such are the benefits (and what greater
benefits can your hearts wish for, or your
imaginations conceive?) to be obtained,
through faith, in these holy places, where
God is pleased to meet us, and to bless us,
if indeed we are disposed to receive the
blessing, by turning every one of us from
his iniquities.

The

DISC. The duties of man, in return for these
XV. mercies of God, are evident.

“Reverence my sanctuary.” — Every thing which bears a relation to God, ought surely to be revered by man; the house, more especially, wherein he condescends to dwell. It is the temple which sanctifieth the gift. In order to this, a church should be built and fitted up, it should be maintained and preserved, in such a manner, as by it's appearance to excite and produce that reverence in every one who enters it; that so he may fall down on his knees and worship, checking himself, if at his entrance he has been guilty of any negligence, or inattention, with the patriarch's reflection—“Surely God is in this place, “and I knew it not! This is the house of “God, and this is the gate of heaven!”

It may be said, “that God has been “served, and may be served, acceptably, “in any church, or without any church.”

He

He may be served acceptably without a church, when it is not in our power to have one; and he may be served acceptably in a bad church, when it is not in our power to have a good one. The Saviour of men, in the day of his humiliation, did not disdain to be born in a stable; but they who love and honour him would not therefore invite him to come into one again. We expend much upon our own houses, to make them elegant as well as comfortable; should we grudge a little to render the house of God neat, and decent, and such as Christians may frequent, without endangering their health? It is true, that "whatever we give to God, we give him of his own:" but one would not therefore give him the worst of his own. He is most honoured by the best; and let the best be his: who has a fairer claim to it? "We cannot by our gifts profit the Almighty." But we may honour him, and profit ourselves; for while man is man, religion, like man, must have a body and a soul; it must be external as well as internal; and the two parts,

DISC.
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DISC. parts, in both cases, will ever have a mutual influence upon each other. The senses and the imagination must have a considerable share in public worship; and devotion will accordingly be depressed or heightened by the mean, sordid, and dispiriting, or the fair, splendid and cheerful appearance of the objects around us. The effects produced respectively are like those we experience, on seeing the habitation of God above overcast with clouds and darkness, or beholding it, when the light of the sun is diffused over it by day, or when by night it is gilded with the softer glory of the moon, and studded with ten thousand stars. You must feel the truth of this observation, and rejoice as much as the Jews formerly mourned and wept, when in their minds they compared the old temple with the new one.

To a sanctuary thus exciting reverence by every thing in and about it, let due reverence be paid by all that approach it. Put off your shoes from off your feet, lay aside the defilement contracted by walking upon the

the earth : put off, as concerning the former conversation, the old man : wash you, make you clean; for the place whereon you stand is holy ground. Drive out the buyers and sellers; clear your hearts of all worldly cares and thoughts; for this house is the house of prayer: when you enter it, salute him that dwelleth therein, by a fervent ejaculation, and address yourselves, with attention and devotion, to his service. It is the presence chamber of the great King. Jehovah is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him.

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But the best and most effectual way of reverencing the sanctuary is, by letting the effects of our behaviour, when we are in it, appear to the world by our behaviour, when we are out of it; by living and acting in the spirit of religion. "Holiness be-
" cometh thine house for ever:" holy persons in holy places. "Without are dogs," and other unclean creatures. Angels visit churches, and men who do so should in temper and disposition resemble them.

When

DISC. When the sons of God present themselves,
XV. the imagination is shocked at the idea of Satan also coming among them, of blasphemy and prophaneness, impurity and malignity being found in the sanctuary; the abomination, which maketh desolate, standing in the holy place! "He that defileth the temple of God, him shall God destroy;" and it is well if he be not provoked to forsake the temple.—O terrible sound of voices said to have been heard in the dead of night by the priests ministering in the temple, a little before the destruction of Jerusalem — "Let us go hence!"

As the house of God therefore is new, let your faith and your devotion be renewed with it. You have invited him to dwell among you; be it your endeavour to detain him. He is your God and Father; you are his people and his children. Walk before him as the people of such a God; behave as the children of such a Father. Let the very sight of this holy place recal to your minds these relations, and the duties suggested

gested by them, from day to day, from week to week, from year to year, from age to age. For the blessing is to you and yours. Want of proper accommodations in the church can no longer be pleaded as an excuse for the absence of yourselves, or families. There will be room for all—"young men and maidens, old men and children"—all may praise the name of the Lord; all may offer up their prayers to him; all will be heard by him.

That the rising generation may be disposed and qualified to use these advantages, they must be instructed betimes in the first principles of religion. In many cases, the parents are not able themselves to instruct their children, or to be at the expence of having them instructed. Indeed, if they were, means have hitherto been wanting to effect it, for want of a proper person to undertake the task, and a proper place in which to perform it. Both are now provided. An institution of this kind is about to be set on foot, and has met with a reasonable

Disc. sonable support by the judicious application
xv. of a benefaction, the produce of which, greatly increased since the time of the bequest, seems to have been intended for the very purpose. The design, however, cannot be carried into execution without that kind and generous assistance, which I am this day to ask at your hands, and which English hearts never suffer to be asked in vain.

Vice is the daughter of ignorance, and the mother of shame and pain, of misery and sorrow, temporal and eternal. To rescue the children of the poor from ignorance, is to save them from all it's mournful consequences. Nor let any one apprehend, they will know too much. They will be taught to know their Maker, and themselves; to be contented with their station, and to perform the duties of it. Creatures made in the image of God, and redeemed by the blood of his Son, ought not to know less: and he who knows so much, will have no reason to regret, at the last day,

day, that he did not know more. By disc.
contributing towards the furtherance of xv.
this pious and charitable undertaking, you
do a work acceptable to God, who would
have all to be saved, and, as the means
of salvation, brought to a knowlege of
the truth: you do a work acceptable to
Christ, who, when he said, "Suffer little
"children to come to me, and forbid
"them not," said, in the strongest manner,
by implication, neglect no possible method
of encouraging and assisting them to come:
you do a work acceptable to your country,
in furnishing it with so many useful mem-
bers; in rendering those a blessing to it,
which would otherwise have been it's curse;
nay, perhaps, in preserving it (if it can be
preserved) by providing, that the succeed-
ing generation shall be more virtuous than
the present: you do a work in the highest
degree honourable and advantageous to your-
selves, because it is a work which will be
acknowledged and rewarded by the world's
Redeemer and it's Judge, when all the stately
and idle monuments of pride, vanity, and
folly,

DISC. folly, shall sink into perdition, and the re-
xv. membrance of them vanish for ever.

There is but one thing more, of which you could wish to be assured, namely, that what is liberally given may be rightly applied. And of this, I think, you have sufficient security in the consideration of the person entrusted with the care of it, under whose direction, by the assistance chiefly of those his friends, who compose the present illustrious assembly, this fair and goodly fabric, to the astonishment of all around it, hath been begun and completed within the space of a year; who esteems this day to be the happiest day of his life; who requesteth not others to do that, which he would be himself unwilling to do; and who seems, through life, to have formed his conduct upon the maxim laid down by that great master of holy living, the excellent Bishop Jeremy Taylor—"The way for a man to be
" a faver by his religion, is to deposit one
" part of his fortune in the Temple, and the
" other in the hands of the Poor."—That
such

such a Shepherd may long be continued a blessing to his Flock, and that his Flock may ever be sensible of the blessing, hear, O Lord, our supplications in heaven thy dwelling place, and, when thou hearest, grant them, for the sake and through the merits of Jesus Christ, our only Saviour and Redeemer, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, might, majesty, and dominion, for ever, world without end. Amen.

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such a shepherd may be called a murderer
blowing to his flock, and that his flock
may ever be capable of the blessing, both O
flock our supplicants in heaven the well-
ing place, and when their hearts grant
them for the sake and through the merits
of Jesus Christ, our only Saviour and His
dearest to whom, with thee and the Holy
Ghost, be all honour and glory, might,
majesty, and dominion, for ever, world
without end. Amen.

DISCOURSE XVI.

SUBMISSION TO GOVERNMENT.

1 PET. II. 13.

*Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the
Lord's sake.*

RELIGION came down from hea- Disc:
XVI.
ven, and was designed to carry us
thither. It's great object is the everlasting
happinefs of man with his God in another
and a better world. But it neglects not to
provide for his comfort, by regulating his
behaviour, in this. It labours to persuade
him, that virtue best promotes his true in-
terest in both; it has contrived, that he can

DISC. advance towards the former, only by a per-
XVI. formance of his duties in the latter.

His duties are many, springing from the various relations in which his Maker has been pleased to place him. No sooner is he born, but he comes under the obligation of duty to his parents as a son, and to his governors as a subject. A state of nature is a state of society; and no society can subsist without government of some kind or other.

In this class of duties, as in all the rest, it is necessary that we should be instructed from time to time; and no time more proper for the purpose, than when we commemorate, as we do upon the anniversary of this day, the accession of our sovereign to the throne of these kingdoms. In the course of the service for the day, certain portions of Scripture are selected with this view. The text is taken from that appointed for the epistle, being a part of the second chapter of the first Epistle of St. Peter, where that Apostle delivers his injunctions

junctions fully and clearly. As St. Paul has written his sentiments in the xiiith chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, by taking them into consideration, together with those of St. Peter, we shall find ample matter whereon to employ our thoughts, and “in the mouth of two witnesses will every truth be established.”

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Obedience to government is by both Apostles pressed upon all Christians. “Let every soul be subject to the higher powers,” or “powers that are set over us:” these are St. Paul’s words. St. Peter’s are to the same effect—“Submit yourselves to the king as supreme, and to rulers as those that are sent by him;” as bearing his authority, and acting in his name, from whom power descends through all inferior and subordinate magistrates, down to the least and lowest. The streams are many, but the fountain is one.

The reasonableness of this apostolical precept is suggested by the terms used to

A a 4

convey

DISC. convey it; for why "rulers and govern-
XVI. "ors," unless it be indeed their office to
 rule and govern, our duty to submit and
 obey? If the governed are to govern the
 governors, from that moment there is an
 end of government: all is strife and confu-
 sion: a civil war will be the consequence,
 and the sword must determine who shall
 govern. If a state cannot settle itself, some
 neighbouring state will take the opportu-
 nity to invade it, and reduce it under a
 foreign yoke. So will it's last condition be
 worse than it's first, and seeking liberty in
 an improper way, it will be sure to find
 slavery in the end.

But, secondly, that there should be go-
 vernment, and that men should obey it, is
 the will and appointment of God. Thus
 St. Paul; "There is no power but of God,
 "the powers that be are ordained of God:"
 and St. Peter; "Submit yourselves to every
 "ordinance of man," or, "every institu-
 "tion of this sort among men, for the
 "Lord's sake; it is the will of God:" "ye
 "must

“ must be subject not only for wrath,” or, DISC.
“ for fear of punishment,” adds St. Paul, XVI.
“ but also for conscience sake ;” *i. e.* be-
cause you know in your hearts, that God
has enjoined you so to be ; and that in
obeying your governors, you obey him.

Of government there have been different kinds among men in different ages and different countries. At the beginning, there were only the children of one man, living under the care of their father. These dispersed, and became heads of their own families respectively ; or many families might agree to live under one chief, and make up little governments of tribes or clans. Then disputes arose, till one stronger than the rest subdued them, and forced them to unite under him. Thus arose the large governments, which likewise contended with each other, till at length one of them swallowed up the others, and became almost universal, giving place itself after a time to a superior power. In this way succeeded to each other the empires of the Assyrians, Persians,

DISC. sians, Grecians, and Romans; out of which
XVI. last, when overthrown and broken in pieces,
sprang the empires and kingdoms at this
day subsisting in the world.

Thus again as to *forms* of government; some nations are governed by one man; some by the principal nobility; some by a council of men chosen to represent the people. Our own is a happy mixture of all three, so contrived that the parts are a mutual check upon each other; and if there be at any time an error in one, it is corrected by the remaining two. Governments by assemblies of the people at large cannot be well carried on, but in small districts, where the people are not too numerous, and can be conveniently called together. They have always been subject to frequent seditions and commotions; as may be seen in the histories of Greece and Rome.

The principle to be collected, from the texts above cited, is plainly this; that the law of God enjoins obedience to every government

vernment settled according to the constitution of the country in which it subsists; and that, even though the governor should be elected by the people; as in lesser matters, a man is free to choose that master into whose service he will enter; but when he is once entered, the Scriptures press upon him from thenceforth the several duties which a servant owes to his master. The members of a corporation choose one from among themselves for their annual magistrate; but when he is chosen, they are bound to shew him the respect and obedience which are due to his office, while he continues in it. — Obedience, in short, is enjoined to the civil magistrate, under whatever form of government we happen to live; nor does that obedience extend to the relinquishing those rights which the citizen may legally claim. St. Paul himself, at Philippi, refuses to comply with the directions intimated by the magistrates, unless the magistrates themselves, by a mark of respect, will make him amends for the illegality of their proceedings in punishing him uncondemned: of the centurion who

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was

DISC. was standing near, when he was about to
xvi. be scourged, he demanded the privilege due
 to a Roman citizen: and when Festus proposed his trial to be held at Jerusalem, the Apostle boldly made his appeal to Cæsar, as every Roman citizen might do. These claims of civil privileges do not indicate unconditional submission to power illegally exercised, but refer us, for the practice of our duty in particular cases, to the laws and constitution of our country*.

A third reason assigned by our two Apostles for obedience to government, is, the benefit derived from it to the community. It is instituted for the protection of good men, by the punishment of evil ones. Of these latter how many are there in the world? And how many more would there be, had we no laws, or, which is the same thing, no magistrate to execute them? Every man might act as his interest or his passions at the moment led him, and no man's property or life would be secure for

* See HUNTINGFORD'S Visitation Sermon, p. 30.

half an hour. The governor, doubtless, is DISC.
a man, fallible and peccable; he may be XVI.
deceived, or he may do wrong without
being deceived: he beareth the sword, and
he may strike with it improperly: but if,
to remedy an occasional inconvenience of
this sort, you dissolve government, what will
be the consequence? Why, more mischief
will be done by the people, thus let loose, in
a month, than would have been done by the
governor in half a century. If all men were
perfectly wise, and perfectly good, and able to
govern themselves, there might be no need
of any to govern them; but till that time
shall come, and in the present state of hu-
man nature, it may be said of too many of
our own species, as it is said of some other
creatures in the book of Psalms, "their
" mouths must be held with bit and bridle,
" lest they fall upon thee." And therefore,
so it has been from the beginning: the
bridle has been holden sometimes by one,
and sometimes by another; but there always
has been a bridle, and always a person to
hold it: nor perhaps does any man living
know

DISC. know any other man than himself, whom
XVI. he thinks fit to be trusted with the absolute
and unbounded liberty of doing what he
pleased.

A fourth reason given by St. Peter for the precept inculcated, is the honour of Christianity — “So is the will of God, “that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.” Christianity being a new sect, rising in opposition to the idolatrous religion of the Roman empire, it’s enemies took occasion to represent it as dangerous to government: the Apostle therefore is the more earnest to wipe off this aspersion. He assures the world, that Christians were men not factious and turbulent, but quiet and peaceful, minding their own business, and knowing nothing more of politics, than to obey their governors, and to pray for them; it being a principle with them to do this from conscience, notwithstanding any difference of religion between themselves and the Heathens; and to suffer, rather than to rebel.

rebel. "The ignorance of foolish men" DISC. XVI.
was thus "put to silence;" it was shewn,
that they had made the objection against
Christianity, not knowing what it was, and
totally mistook the nature of it, since it
commanded subjection not only to the good
and gentle, but also to the froward: "for"
(proceeds the Apostle) "this is thankwor-
"thy, if a man, for conscience towards
"God, endure grief, suffering wrongfully.
"For what glory is it, if, when ye be
"buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it
"patiently? But if, when ye do well, and
"suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this
"is acceptable with God. For even here-
"unto were ye called; because Christ also
"suffered for us, leaving us an example that
"ye should follow his steps; who did no
"sin, neither was guile found in his mouth;
"who when he was reviled, reviled not
"again, when he suffered, he threatened
"not, but committed himself to him who
"judgeth righteously." This example of
our blessed Lord was carefully followed by
the Apostles and first Christians. The sen-
timents

DISC. timents of our own church are sufficiently
XVI. declared by the appointment of the Scripture which we have been considering, as the epistle for the day.

Cases, doubtless, may arise, in which this duty will seem hard to practise.

As to the duty being hard to practise, many others are equally so. Is it not hard, that, in some circumstances, we must give up houses and lands, father, mother, wife, children, yea and one's own life too, so as not to seek to save it by going one step out of the rule of the Gospel? And is it not hard that he who thus saves his life in time, should lose it in eternity? Flesh and blood will complain, and Christ loses many disciples, who forsake and walk no more with him, because of these hard sayings. What then is to be done? Must we bring down the laws of God to comply with flesh and blood; or must we not rather, through divine grace, exalt flesh and blood, to comply with the laws of God? The religion,
like

like the character, of our Lord, is one of suffering and self-denial; he who has determined against these, may as well wipe off from his forehead, at once, the *cross* with which it was signed at his baptism.

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You will say, the doctrine is unreasonable, and of tyranny there can be no end, if it be unlawful to resist it.

Perhaps, if we only lay aside for a moment our passions and prejudices, we shall see how much better God has provided for our happiness than we ourselves should do, in commanding obedience to our governors, though at any time they happen not to be so good as we could wish them to be.

For, first, if you allow to subjects a power of taking arms, and deposing their princes, *who is to be judge* when there is a sufficient reason for exerting such power? Men will never judge fairly and impartially in their own cause. The best writers on this side of the question allow, that nothing

DISC. less can justify it, than “a total subversion
XVI. “of the constitution.” But if they wait
till this is effected, it will be too late: and
if they are to begin before, how often will
they be deluded by artful and designing
men, who will exclaim, that a total sub-
version of the constitution is intended,
whenever the demands of themselves and
their friends are not satisfied, or their plans
adopted and pursued! While the admini-
stration of government is in the hands of
men, errors must be committed; factious
spirits will never be wanting to aggravate
and represent them as much worse than
they really are, to alarm the people with
jealousies and surmises, and blow the trum-
pet of sedition and rebellion through the
land. How soon the people are seduced,
and how little dependance can be placed on
their voice, may be learned from the beha-
viour of the Jews to the Son of God,
whom the multitude on one day ushered
into his capital with acclamations and Ho-
sannas; and within a week, nothing was
heard in the streets of that same capital,
but

but "Away with him, Away with him; Disc.
"Crucify him, Crucify him!" XVI.

2. It should be considered, that although government may sometimes be bad, rebellion will generally be worse. "The wrath of a king" (says the Scripture) "is as the roaring of a lion;" he may destroy some: but "the madness of the people" is as the raging of a tempestuous sea, when it has burst it's bounds; it overwhelms all. Compare the mischief said to be done, or designed, by our unfortunate Charles I. with the bloodshed and murder, the ravages and devastations of the *Great Rebellion*; from the horrors and miseries of which the nation was at length obliged to seek deliverance and protection by re-establishing the government that had been cast off. Whether the tumults and commotions that now distract a neighbouring country, will not end in like manner, time must discover.

A warning, however, and a very salutary
one,

DISC. one, is suggested to princes by the sight or
XVI. the history of such events. Obedience to government is the Scripture doctrine, and the ministers of religion are bound to preach it: by preaching it they may do much good, and can do no harm. But though they preach it, and the people receive it, ever so heartily and affectionately, let not governors presume upon that circumstance so far as to abuse their power, and treat their subjects otherwise than they ought to be treated, that is, as a shepherd treats his flock, and a father his children. For, when driven to extremities, men will not always act according to their principles. *Oppression will make a wise man mad*; and that ruler is very far from a wise man, who ventures upon the experiment.

3. But respecting the principle of obedience, and the inconveniences to which it may sometimes subject us, we do not sufficiently rely upon the providence or the promises of God. The Scriptures teach us, that as he setteth a righteous prince
over

over a people that fear and serve him, so DISC.
he often sendeth an unrighteous one to XVI.
punish a wicked nation. In Job it is said,
that "God maketh a wicked man to reign,
"for the sins of the people;" and in Ho-
sea, that "he giveth a prince" (meaning
an evil one) "in his anger; and taketh
"away a prince" (that is, a good one) "in
"his displeasure." When, therefore, we
have a good prince, let us by our obe-
dience move God to continue him; when
we have one of another character, let us
repent of those sins which provoked him
to set such an one over us, and he will de-
liver us as he sees fit, either by taking him
away, or changing his heart; for, "the
"king's heart is in the hand of the Lord,
"as the rivers of water; he turneth it
"whithersoever he will."—In one word,
let us either deserve good governors, or
bear with such as we deserve.

Happy are we of this nation (did we
but know our own happiness!) in pos-
sessing a constitution so framed by the
wisdom

DISC. wisdom of ages, as almost to preclude the
XVI. necessity of nice questions and disputes
upon this topic. In an empire extended
like ours, government cannot be conducted
by an assembly of the people at large, but
they are free to choose the persons by whom
they will be represented in the great coun-
cil of the nation; and if these do not give
satisfaction, they are free, at certain con-
stantly returning periods, to change them
for others. In this council of representatives
most laws originate; without their consent
none can be enacted; nor can any be en-
acted, till they have been reconsidered and
discussed in another assembly of the nobili-
ty, men of the first families and fortunes in
the country, men liberally educated, men
of reading and experience. To acts thus
framed by one set of men, matured, re-
vised, and, if need be, corrected by another,
every kind of information being first called
in by both, is requisite the consent of the
prince. And even, after all, if when pro-
mulgated and carried into execution, a law
has been found productive of unforeseen in-
conveniences

conveniences and hardships to any particular class of subjects, upon petitions being duly preferred to the legislature, it has been taken afresh into consideration, altered, and amended. It seems impossible for imagination itself to conceive a form of government better calculated to answer every good purpose. The subject has all the liberty he can have, consistently with the very being of society; while, to the ease and comfort of the prince, as well as the security of his people, his power is so defined and settled, that he can do no wrong, but “by and with the consent and advice of both houses of parliament.” This constitution has long been the glory of Britain, and the envy of most nations around us; nay, the people nearest in situation to us, with whom the solicitude of an Englishman for it was a constant subject of ridicule, have undergone such an astonishing inversion of national character, that they are fainting and languishing for something like it, and have thrown their country into convulsions, to obtain it. From an eminence,
the

DISC.
XVI.

DISC.
XVI.

the firm and solid shore, we behold the storm raging below, with the satisfaction of reflecting, that we neither raised it, nor wish to take any advantage of it.

At the head of our constitution, we may say without flattery, appears a king, whose first principle it is to fear God, and his first wish that all his subjects might do the same, and experience that support from above, under all their trials and afflictions, which he has experienced under all his own; and, in time, that deliverance from them.

A cloud suddenly appearing in the horizon, soon overspread the face of the sky, and obscured the source of light and motion in our political system. Directed whither to have recourse for assistance, the intercessory prayer of a whole people ascended to the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, the sure refuge of all who call upon him in the time of trouble. — The prayer was heard — the cloud passed; the day returned; the King was seen rejoicing in

in thy strength, O Lord ; and a nation, DISC.
revived from the dead, again walking in XVI.
the light of thy countenance ; joy and
gladness were heard in our land, thankf-
giving and the voice of melody. Thousands
and ten thousands hailed the restoration of
their sovereign to them with tears of grati-
tude, confessing they never knew before
how dear he was to them.

May this great blessing never fall from
our remembrance ; and may no future of-
fences and transgressions of ours prevent it
from being permanent : may gladness in
our hearts produce righteousness in our
lives, and mercy melt those, whom judg-
ment could not soften : may the goodness of
God answer the end which it is always in-
tended to answer, that of leading us to re-
pentance, and by repentance, through faith
unfeigned, and love unbounded, to those
blissful regions, where shall be no more
death, neither crying, nor pain, but earthly
sorrow shall end in heavenly joy, and a
temporal cross be succeeded by an eternal
crown.

T H E E N D.

in thy strength, O Lord; and a nation
rejoiced from the dawn, again waiting in
the light of thy countenance; joy and
glads were heard in our land, thanks
giving and the voice of melody. Thousands
and ten thousands hailed the restoration of
their loved ones to them with tears of grief.
tude, confessing they never knew before
how dear he was to them, and how
May this great blessing never fall from
our remembrance; and may no future of
losses and misfortunes of ours prevent it
from being permanent: may glads in
our hearts, perfect righteousness in our
lives, and many more things, whom judg-
ment could not lessen: may the goodness of
God answer the end which it is always in-
tended to answer, that of leading us to re-
pentance and by repentance, through which
unfettered and love unbounded, to those
blessed regions, where shall be no more
death, neither crying nor pain, but earthly
joy and in heavenly joy, and a
temporal cross be succeeded by an eternal
crown.

ERRATA.

VOL. III.

- P. 22. l. 16. for *three* read *there*.
132. l. 8. last *b* wanting in *which*.
191. l. 14, 15. for *forbidden* read *for bidden*.

VOL. IV.

- P. 32. l. 19. after *perform* insert a comma.
65. l. 2, 3. for *all the brightest diamonds* read, *the brightest diamond*.
73. l. last but one, for *blessings all around* read, *blessings of all around*.